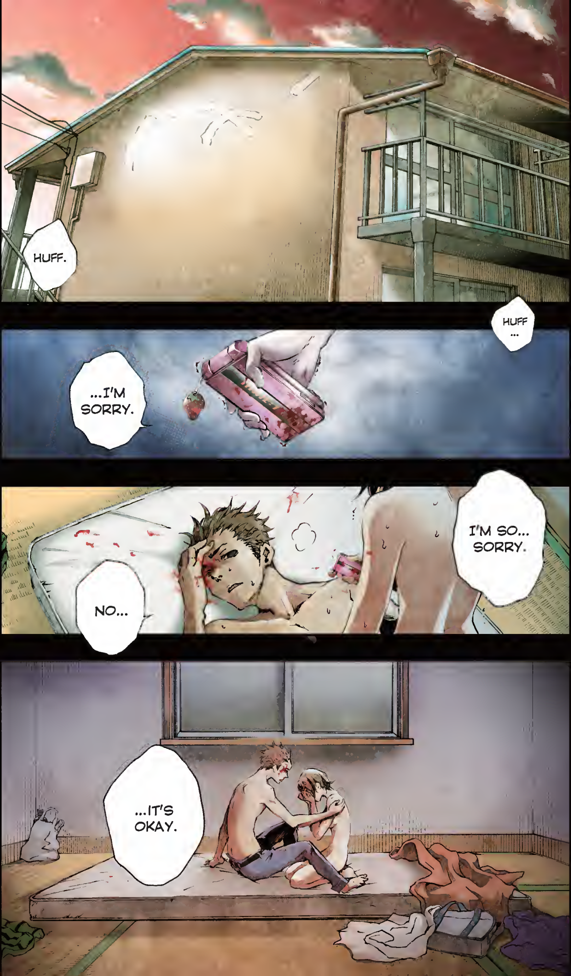
2

STORY BY
TOMOHIRO MAEKAWA

ART BY
JINSEI KATAOKA

FROM THE CREATOR OF *DEADMAN WONDERLAND*

LIVINGSTONE


HUFF.
HUFF...
...I'M SORRY.
I'M SO... SORRY.
NO...
...IT'S OKAY.

LIVINGSTONE 2

Chapter 6: The Pros and Cons of Attachment 1

Chapter 7: The Rewards of Cleaning Up Someone Else's Mess 41

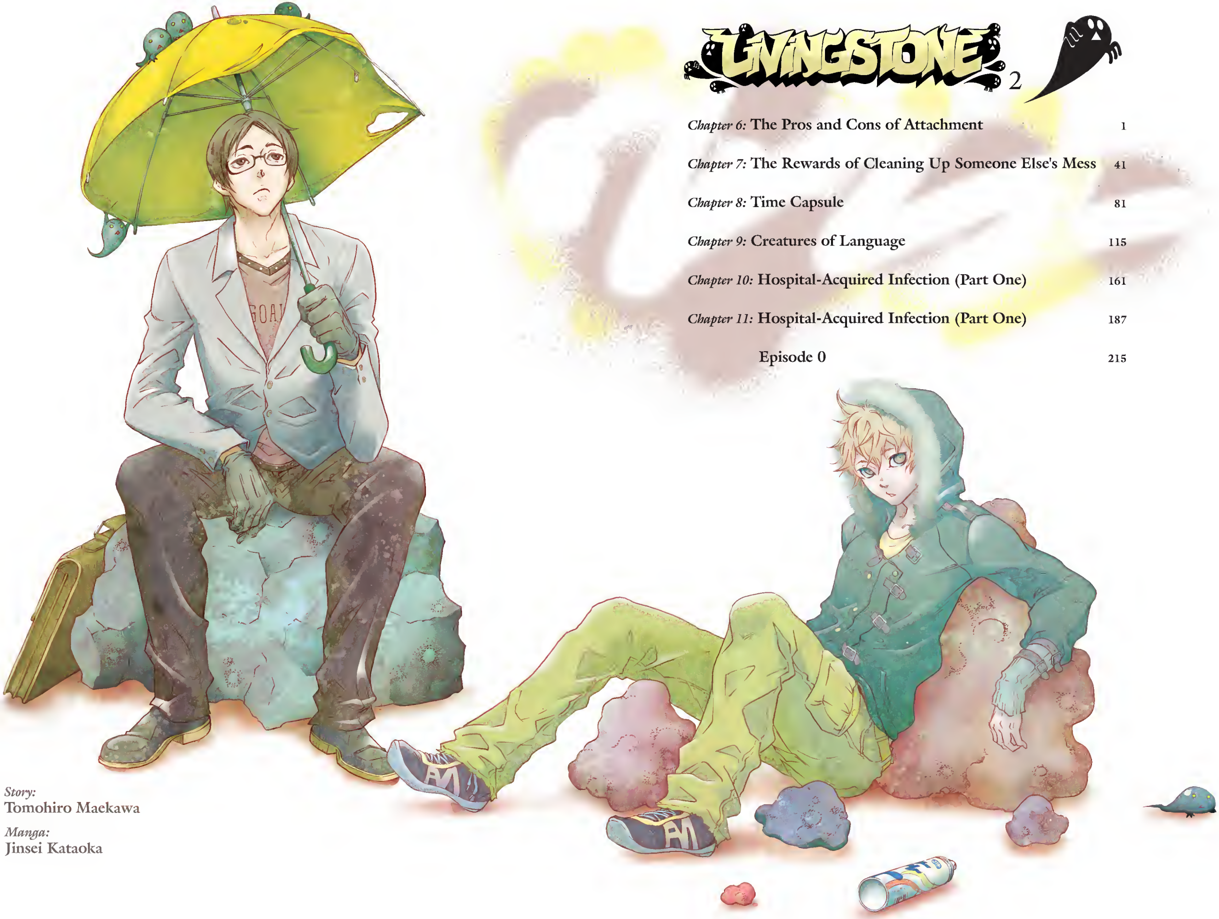
Chapter 8: Time Capsule 81

Chapter 9: Creatures of Language 115

Chapter 10: Hospital-Acquired Infection (Part One) 161

Chapter 11: Hospital-Acquired Infection (Part One) 187

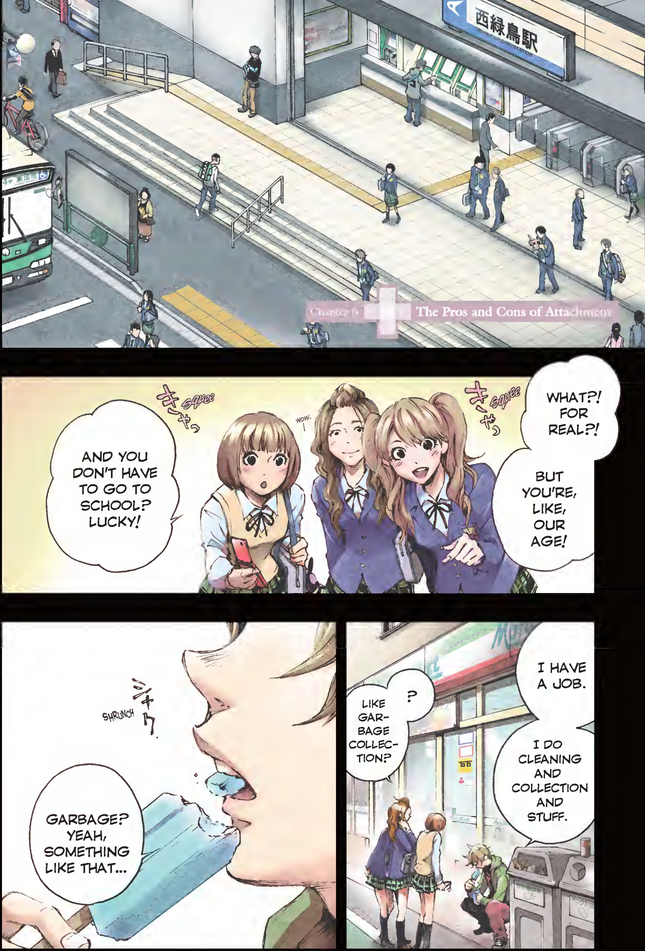
Episode 0 215

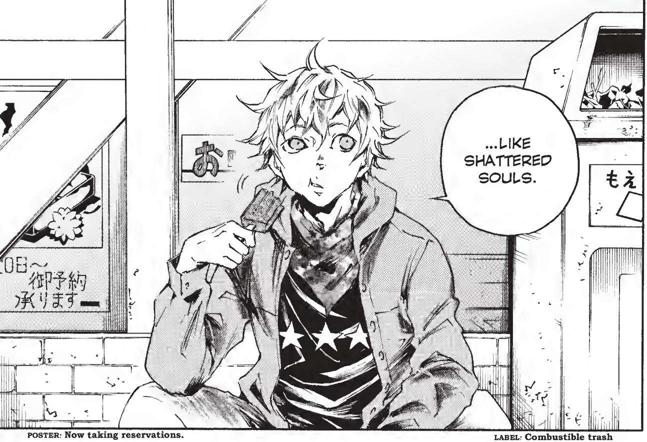


Story:
Tomohiro Maekawa

Manga:
Jinsei Kataoka

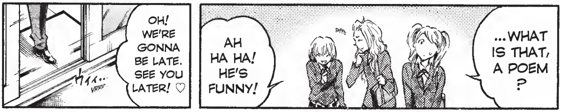
Chapter 6 The Pros and Cons of Attachment

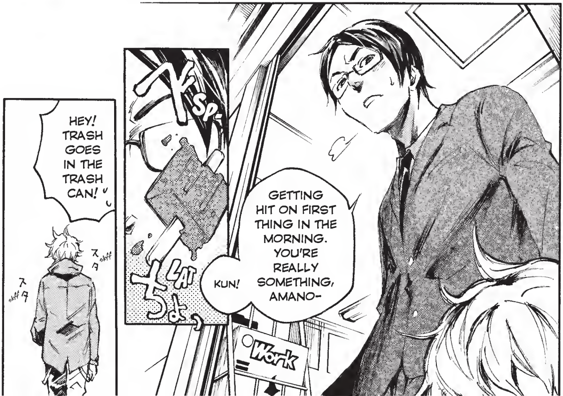

西緑鳥駅
WHAT?! FOR REAL?!
BUT YOU'RE, LIKE, OUR AGE!
きゃっ squee
WOW.
きゃっ squee
AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO TO SCHOOL? LUCKY!
I HAVE A JOB.
I DO CLEANING AND COLLECTION AND STUFF.
?
LIKE GARBAGE COLLECTION?
シャク SHRUNCH
GARBAGE? YEAH, SOMETHING LIKE THAT...

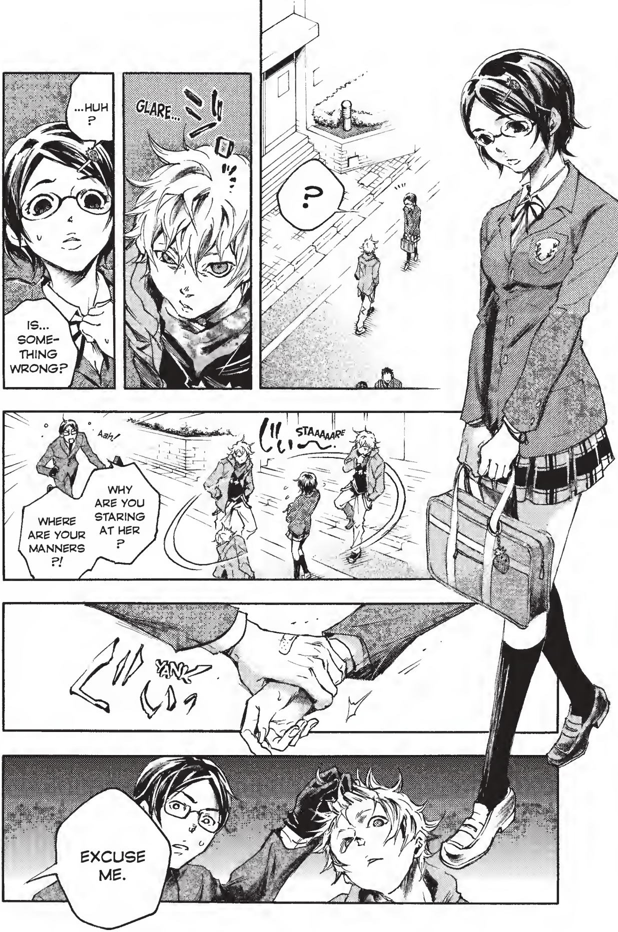

...LIKE SHATTERED SOULS.
もえ
お
20日～
御予約
承ります

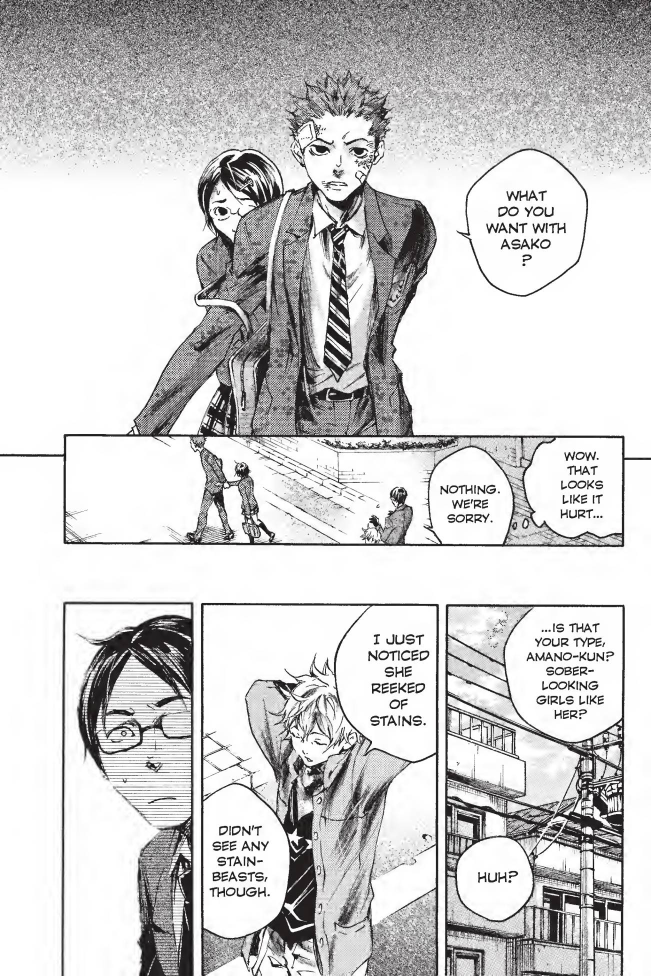
POSTER: Now taking reservations.

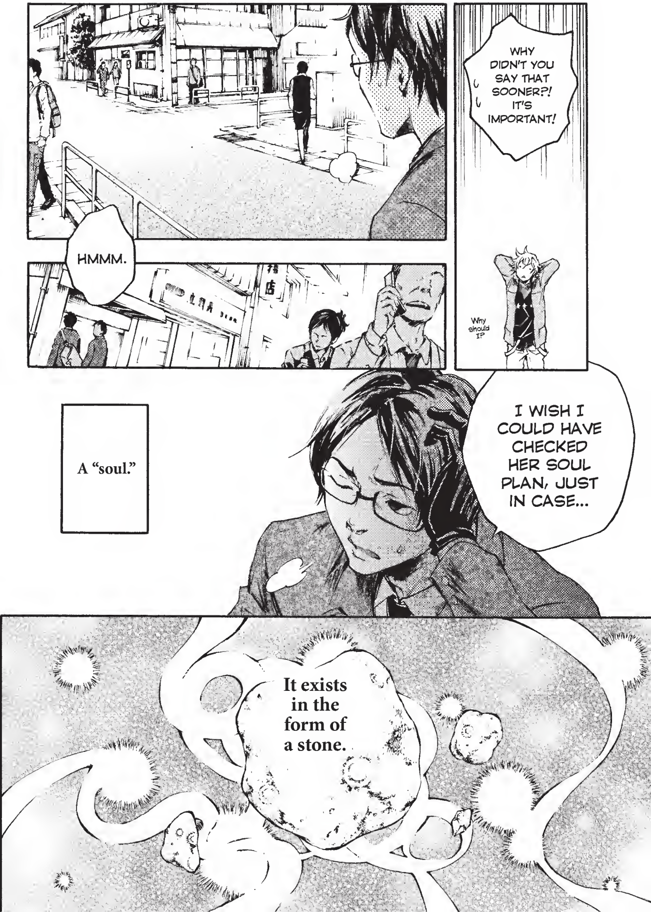
LABEL: Combustible trash

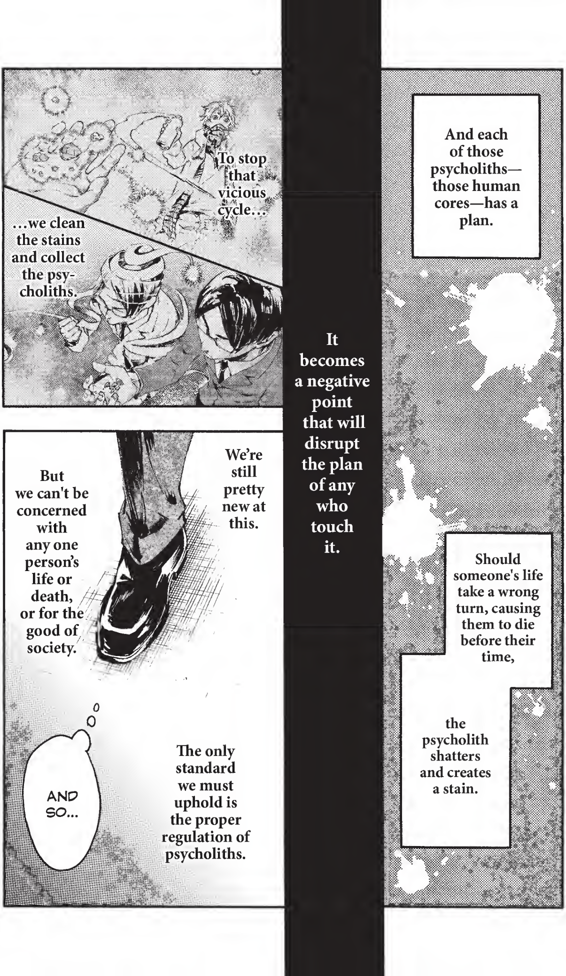

...WHAT IS THAT, A POEM?
PFFt
AH HA HA! HE'S FUNNY!
OH! WE'RE GONNA BE LATE. SEE YOU LATER! ♡
ヴィィ… VRRR

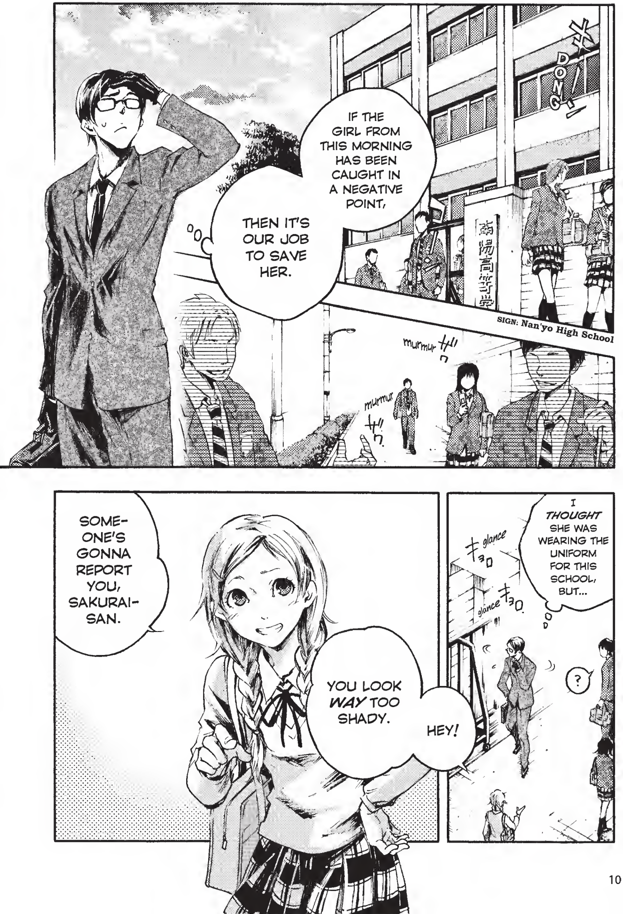

GETTING HIT ON FIRST THING IN THE MORNING. YOU'RE REALLY SOMETHING, AMANO-
KUN!
SP-
LAT
ちょ
Work
HEY! TRASH GOES IN THE TRASH CAN!
スタ skff
スタ skff

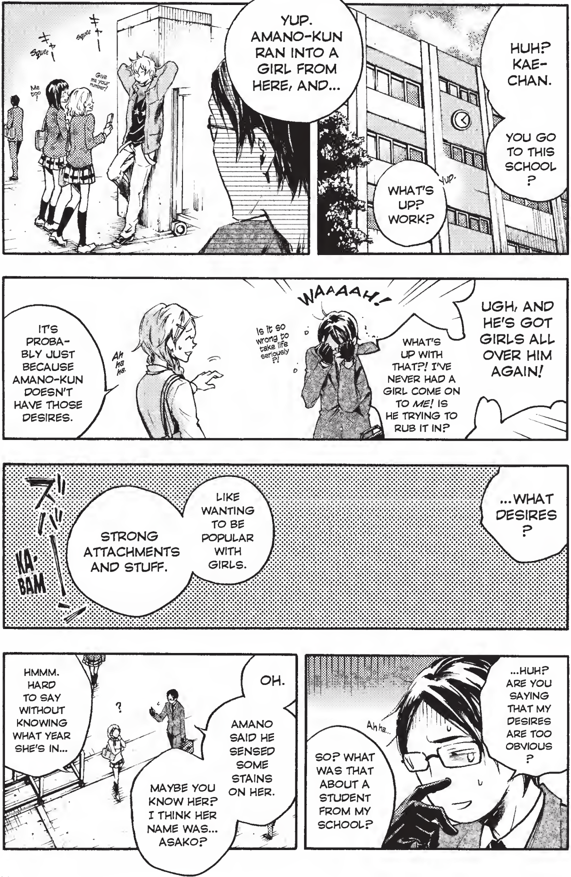

?
GLARE...
...HUH ?
IS... SOMETHING WRONG?
STAAAAARE
Aah!
WHY ARE YOU STARING AT HER ?
WHERE ARE YOUR MANNERS ?!
YANK
EXCUSE ME.

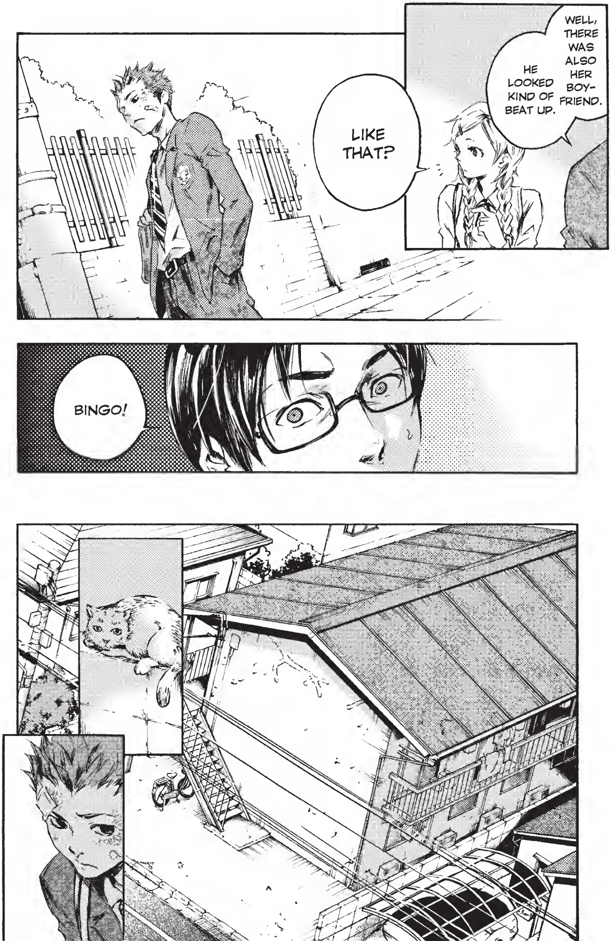

WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ASAKO ?
WOW. THAT LOOKS LIKE IT HURT...
NOTHING. WE'RE SORRY.
...IS THAT YOUR TYPE, AMANO-KUN? SOBER-LOOKING GIRLS LIKE HER?
HUH?
I JUST NOTICED SHE REEKED OF STAINS.
DIDN'T SEE ANY STAIN-BEASTS, THOUGH.

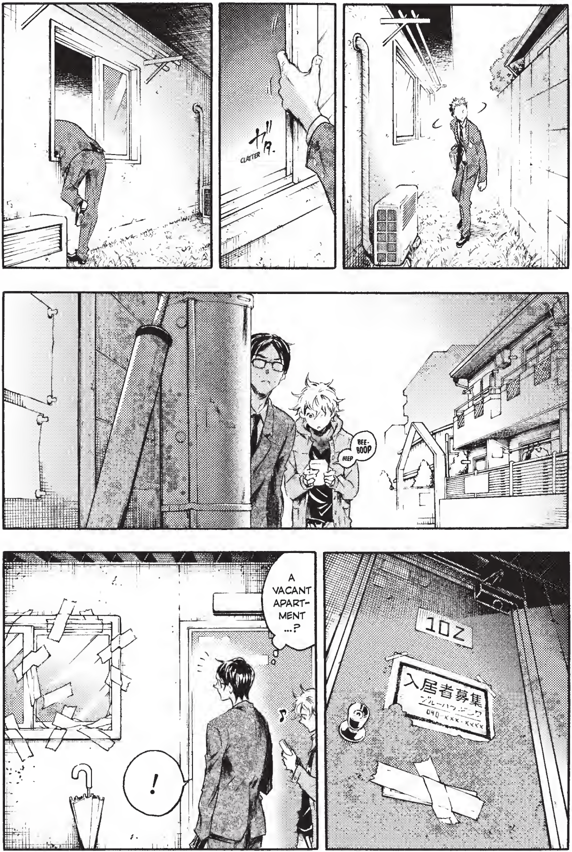

WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY THAT SOONER?! IT'S IMPORTANT!
Why should I?
HMMM.
I WISH I COULD HAVE CHECKED HER SOUL PLAN, JUST IN CASE...
A "soul."
It exists in the form of a stone.


And each of those psycholiths—those human cores—has a plan.
Should someone's life take a wrong turn, causing them to die before their time,
the psycholith shatters and creates a stain.
It becomes a negative point that will disrupt the plan of any who touch it.
To stop that vicious cycle…
…we clean the stains and collect the psycholiths.
We're still pretty new at this.
But we can't be concerned with any one person's life or death, or for the good of society.
The only standard we must uphold is the proper regulation of psycholiths.
AND SO…

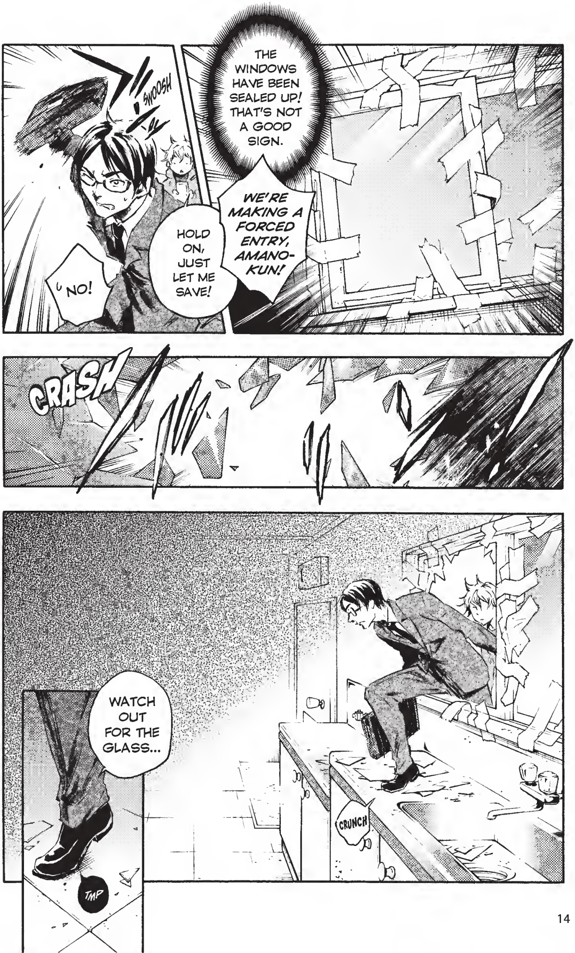

ドン DONG
IF THE GIRL FROM THIS MORNING HAS BEEN CAUGHT IN A NEGATIVE POINT,
THEN IT'S OUR JOB TO SAVE HER.
南陽高等学校
SIGN: Nan'yo High School
murmur ザワ
murmur ザワ
I *THOUGHT* SHE WAS WEARING THE UNIFORM FOR THIS SCHOOL, BUT...
glance キョロ
glance キョロ
?
HEY!
YOU LOOK *WAY* TOO SHADY.
SOME-ONE'S GONNA REPORT YOU, SAKURAI-SAN.

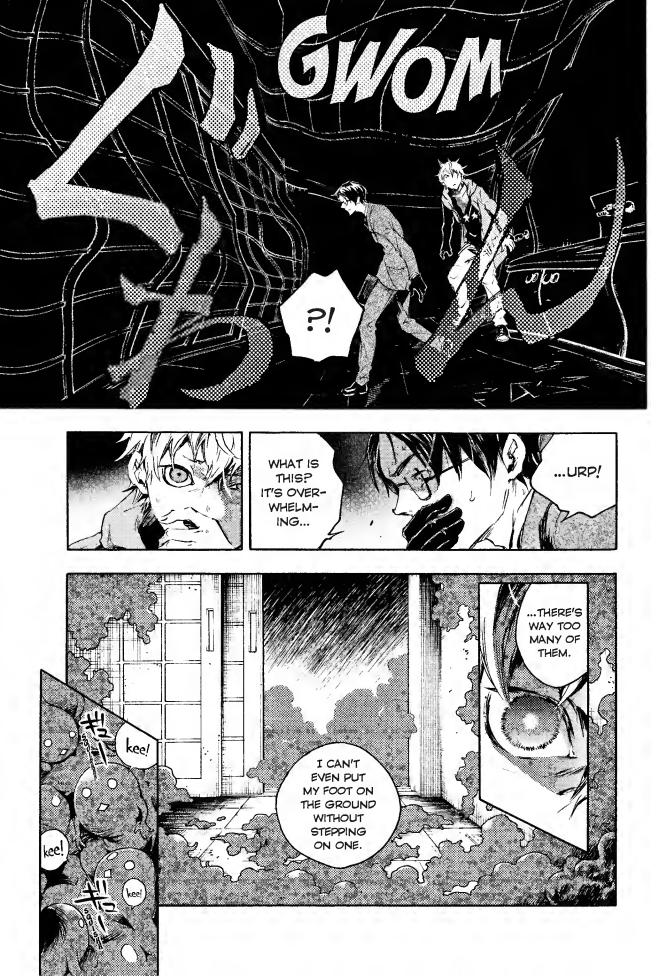

HUH? KAE-CHAN.
YOU GO TO THIS SCHOOL?
YUP.
WHAT'S UP? WORK?
YUP. AMANO-KUN RAN INTO A GIRL FROM HERE, AND...
キャー Squee
キャー Squee
Give me your number!
Me too!
UGH, AND HE'S GOT GIRLS ALL OVER HIM AGAIN!
WAAAAH!
WHAT'S UP WITH THAT?! I'VE NEVER HAD A GIRL COME ON TO ME! IS HE TRYING TO RUB IT IN?
Is it so wrong to take life seriously?!
Ah ha ha.
IT'S PROBABLY JUST BECAUSE AMANO-KUN DOESN'T HAVE THOSE DESIRES.
...WHAT DESIRES?
LIKE WANTING TO BE POPULAR WITH GIRLS.
STRONG ATTACHMENTS AND STUFF.
ズバー KA-BAM
...HUH? ARE YOU SAYING THAT MY DESIRES ARE TOO OBVIOUS?
Ah ha...
SO? WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT A STUDENT FROM MY SCHOOL?
OH.
AMANO SAID HE SENSED SOME STAINS ON HER.
MAYBE YOU KNOW HER? I THINK HER NAME WAS... ASAKO?
?
HMMM. HARD TO SAY WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT YEAR SHE'S IN...

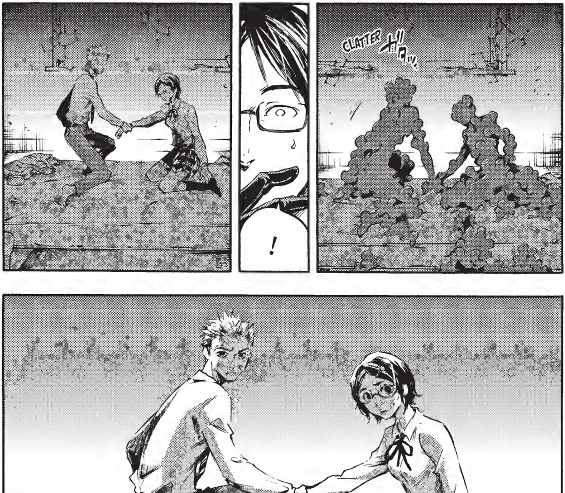

WELL, THERE WAS ALSO HER BOYFRIEND.
HE LOOKED KIND OF BEAT UP.
LIKE THAT?
BINGO!

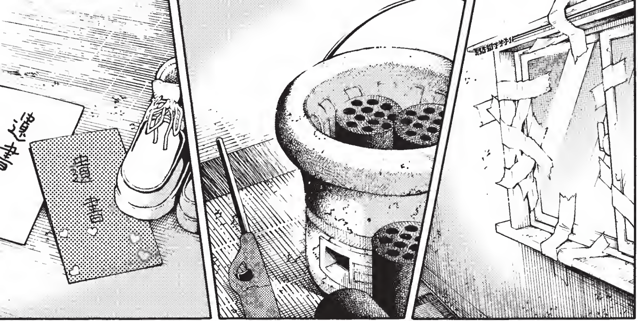

ガタ
CLATTER
BEE-BOOP
BEEP
A VACANT APARTMENT ...?
!
102
入居者募集
ブルーハウジング
040-XXX-XXXX

SIGN: Now leasing

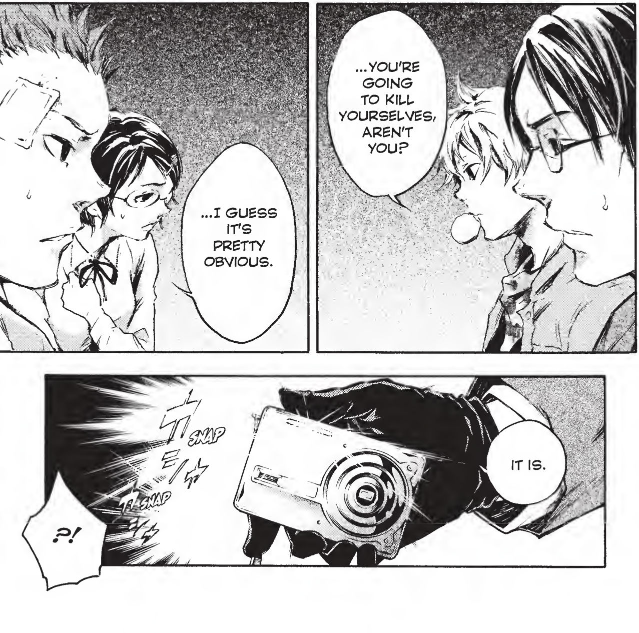

THE WINDOWS HAVE BEEN SEALED UP! THAT'S NOT A GOOD SIGN.
WE'RE MAKING A FORCED ENTRY, AMANO-KUN!
SWOOSH
HOLD ON, JUST LET ME SAVE!
NO!
CRASH
CRUNCH
WATCH OUT FOR THE GLASS...
TMP

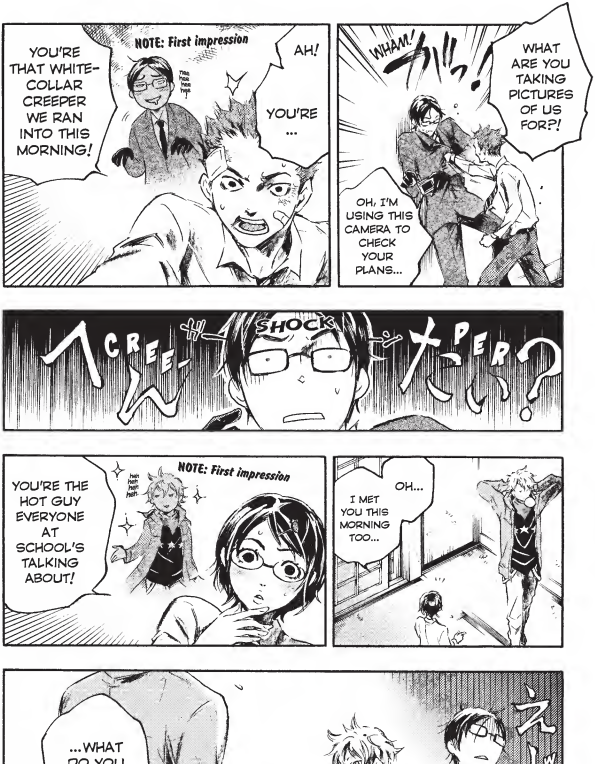

GWOM
?!
...URP!
WHAT IS THIS? IT'S OVERWHELMING...
...THERE'S WAY TOO MANY OF THEM.
I CAN'T EVEN PUT MY FOOT ON THE GROUND WITHOUT STEPPING ON ONE.
kee!
SQUISH
kee!
kee!
SQUISH

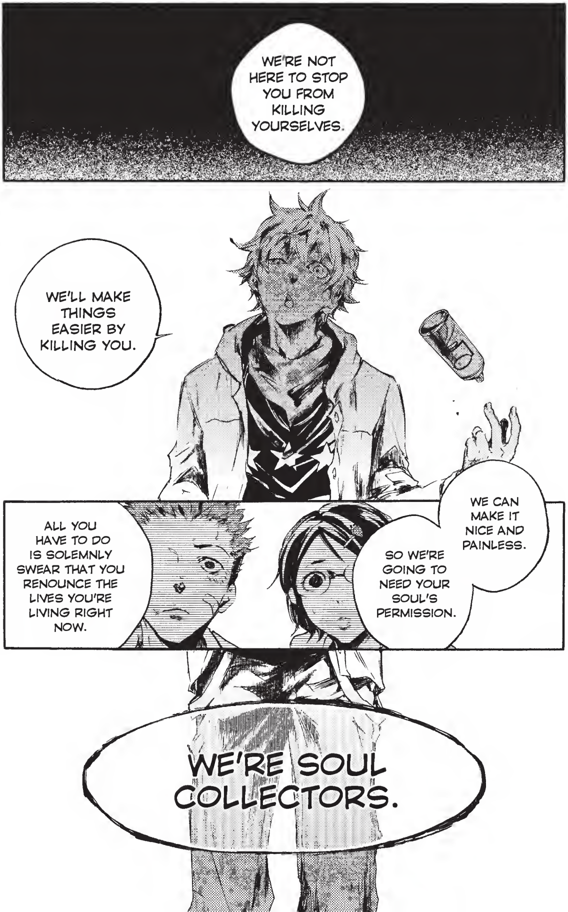

CLATTER
!
...WAIT.
IT'S ALL RIGHT— DON'T RUN FROM US!
RUSTLE
WE'RE NOT THE POLICE, WE'RE NOT BURGLARS, AND WE'RE NOT PART OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH.
YOU TWO ARE IN, UM...
GASP

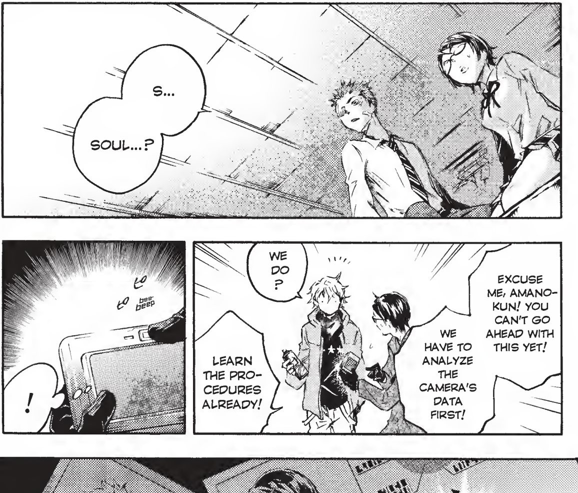


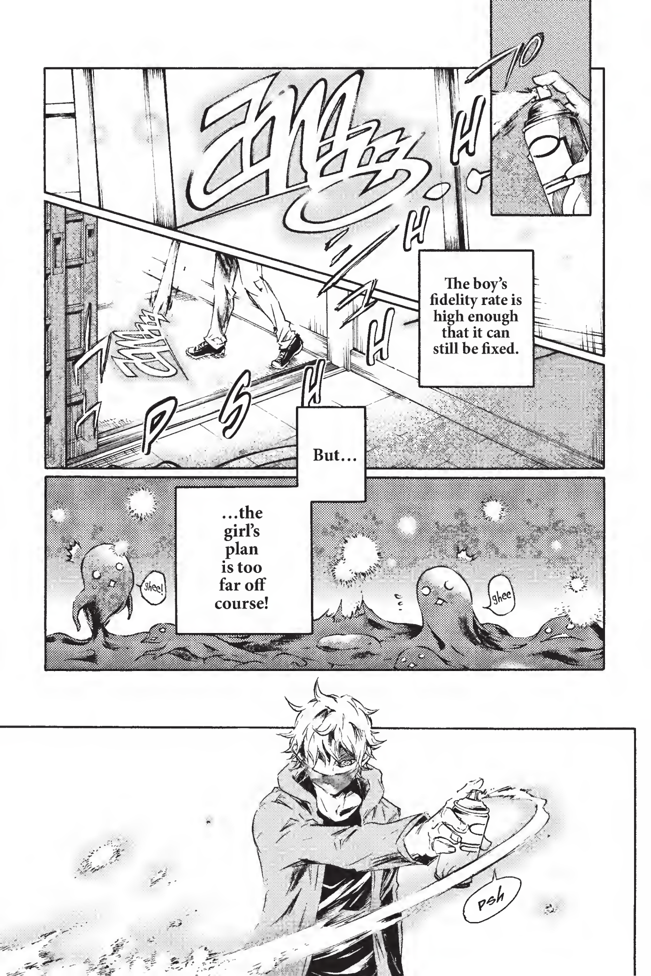
ENVELOPES: Suicide note

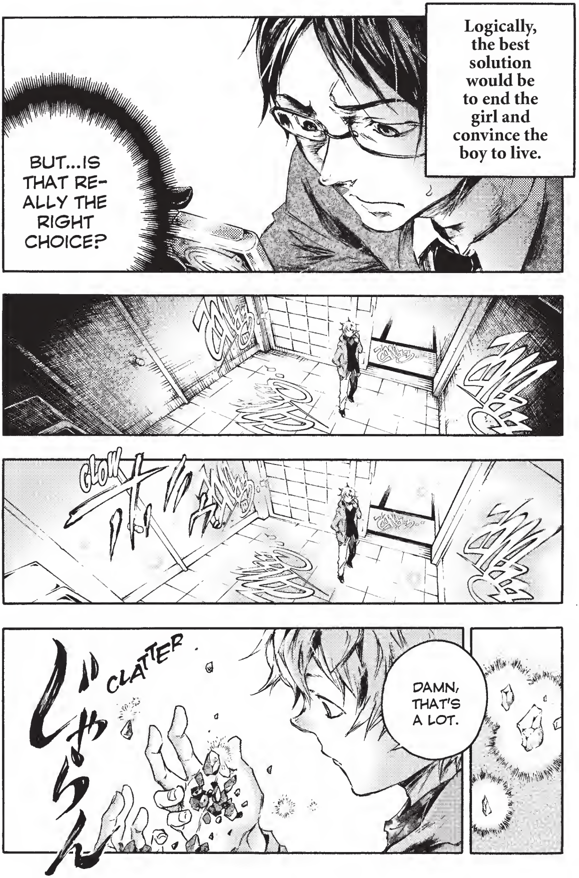

...YOU'RE GOING TO KILL YOURSELVES, AREN'T YOU?
...I GUESS IT'S PRETTY OBVIOUS.
IT IS.
SNAP
SNAP
?!

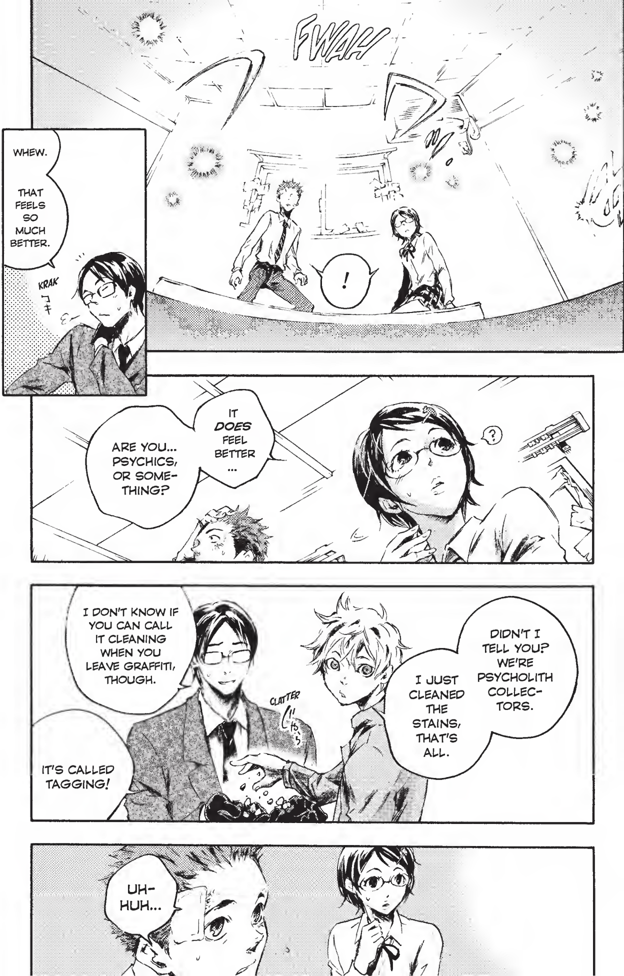

WHAM!
WHAT ARE YOU TAKING PICTURES OF US FOR?!
OH, I'M USING THIS CAMERA TO CHECK YOUR PLANS...
AH!
YOU'RE ...
NOTE: First impression
hee hee hee hee
YOU'RE THAT WHITE-COLLAR CREEPER WE RAN INTO THIS MORNING!
SHOCK
CREE-PER?
OH...
I MET YOU THIS MORNING TOO...
NOTE: First impression
heh heh heh heh.
YOU'RE THE HOT GUY EVERYONE AT SCHOOL'S TALKING ABOUT!
WHAAAT..
...WHAT DO YOU PEOPLE WANT?

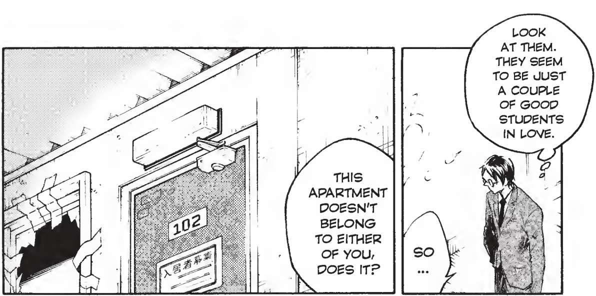

WE'RE NOT HERE TO STOP YOU FROM KILLING YOURSELVES.
WE'LL MAKE THINGS EASIER BY KILLING YOU.
WE CAN MAKE IT NICE AND PAINLESS.
SO WE'RE GOING TO NEED YOUR SOUL'S PERMISSION.
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS SOLEMNLY SWEAR THAT YOU RENOUNCE THE LIVES YOU'RE LIVING RIGHT NOW.
WE'RE SOUL COLLECTORS.


S...
SOUL...?
EXCUSE ME, AMANO-KUN! YOU CAN'T GO AHEAD WITH THIS YET!
WE HAVE TO ANALYZE THE CAMERA'S DATA FIRST!
WE DO?
LEARN THE PROCEDURES ALREADY!
ピ ピ bee-beep
!
FLUCTUATION
525661 HOURS
PLAN FIDELITY RATE: 63%
FLUCTUATION
660028 HOURS
PLAN FIDELITY RATE: 79%
...I KNEW IT. THIS SUICIDE ISN'T PART OF THE PLAN FOR EITHER OF THEM.
RATTLE シャカ
RATTLE シャカ
♪

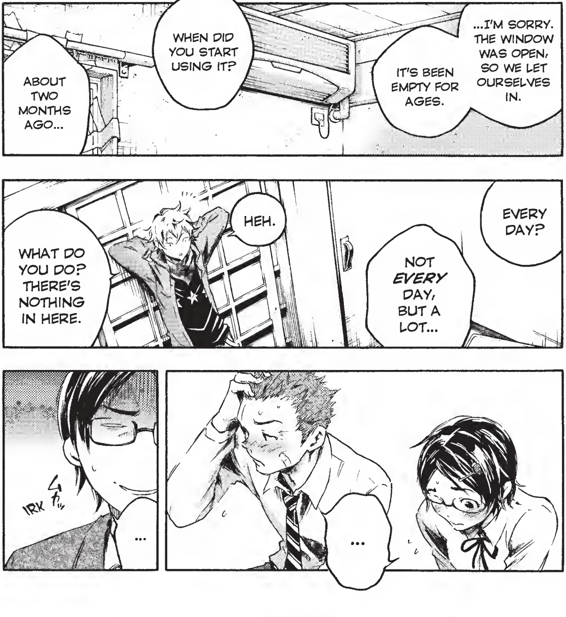

The boy's fidelity rate is high enough that it can still be fixed.
But…
…the girl's plan is too far off course!
ghee
ghee!
psh

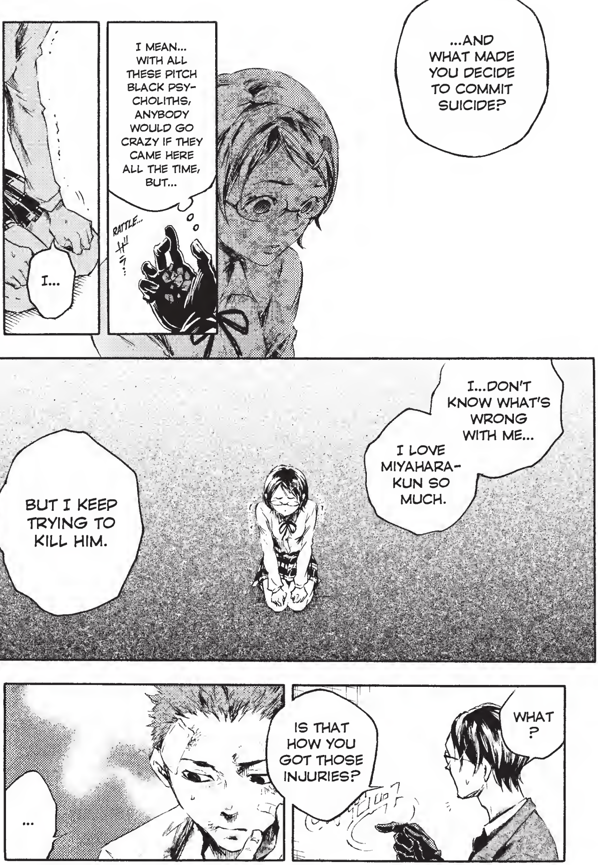

Logically, the best solution would be to end the girl and convince the boy to live.
BUT...IS THAT REALLY THE RIGHT CHOICE?
GLOW
しゃらん
CLATTER
DAMN, THAT'S A LOT.

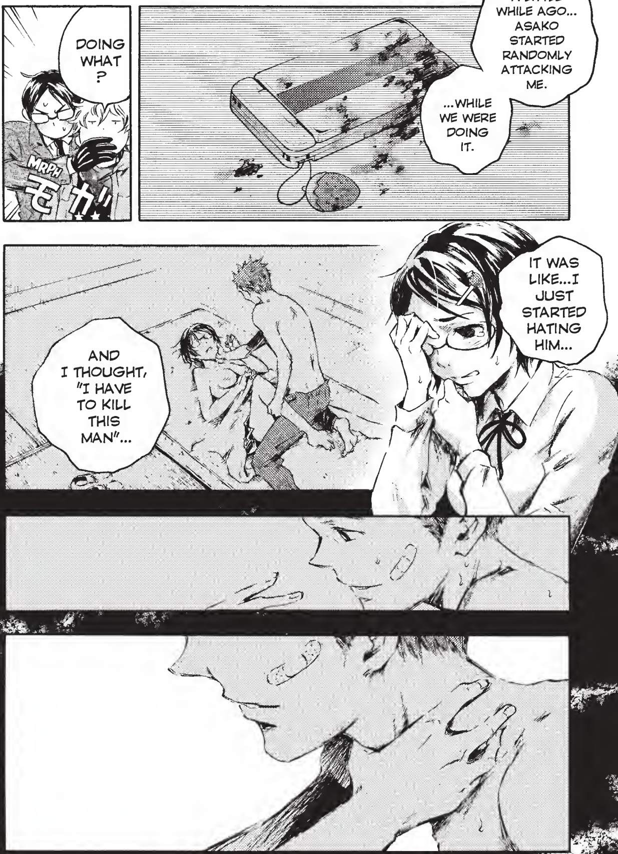

FWAH
!
WHEW. THAT FEELS SO MUCH BETTER.
KRAK
?
IT *DOES* FEEL BETTER...
ARE YOU... PSYCHICS, OR SOMETHING?
DIDN'T I TELL YOU? WE'RE PSYCHOLITH COLLECTORS.
I JUST CLEANED THE STAINS, THAT'S ALL.
CLATTER
I DON'T KNOW IF YOU CAN CALL IT CLEANING WHEN YOU LEAVE GRAFFITI, THOUGH.
IT'S CALLED TAGGING!
UH-HUH...

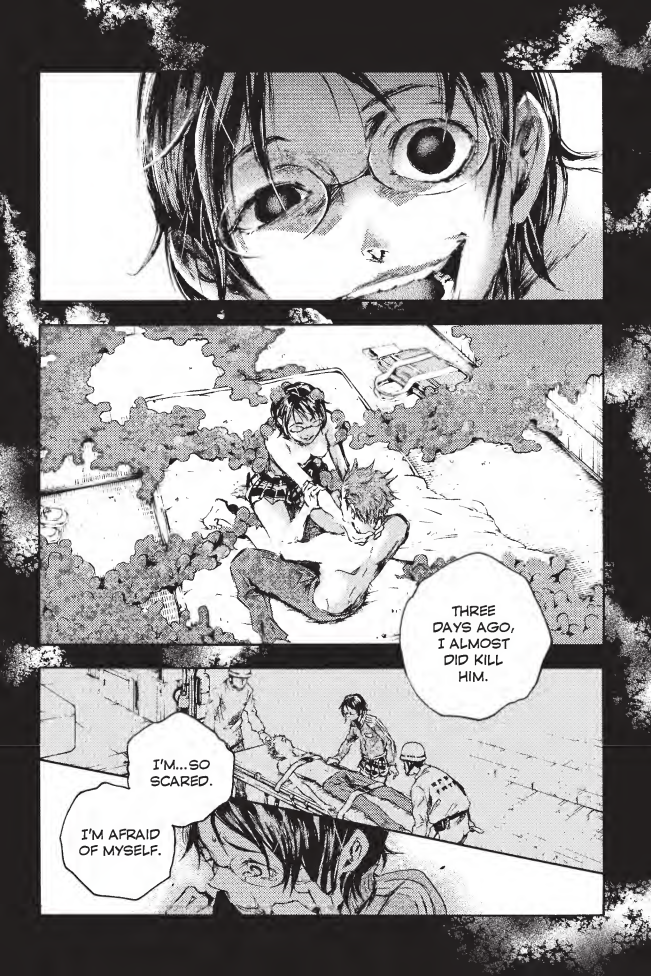

LOOK AT THEM. THEY SEEM TO BE JUST A COUPLE OF GOOD STUDENTS IN LOVE.
SO ...
THIS APARTMENT DOESN'T BELONG TO EITHER OF YOU, DOES IT?
102
入居者募集

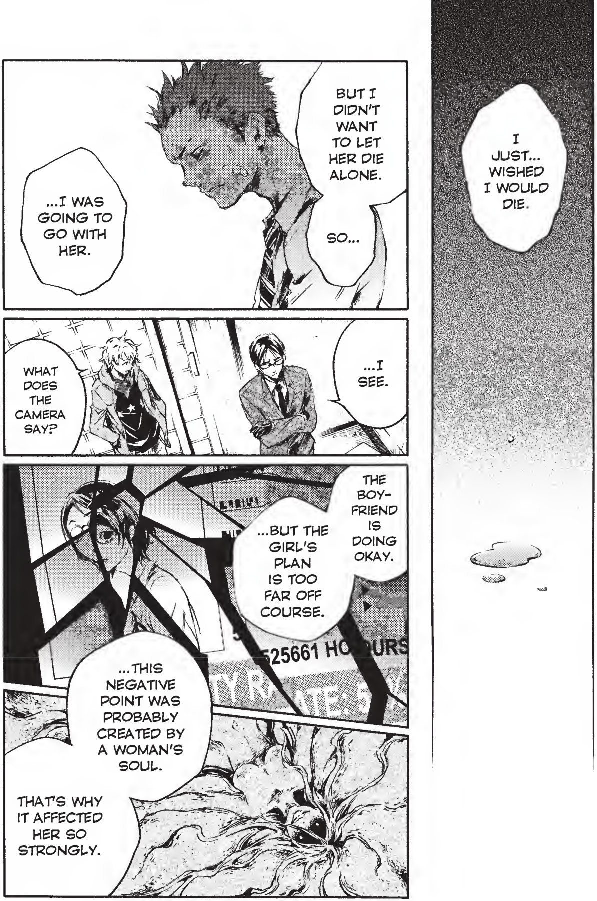
SIGN: Now leasing

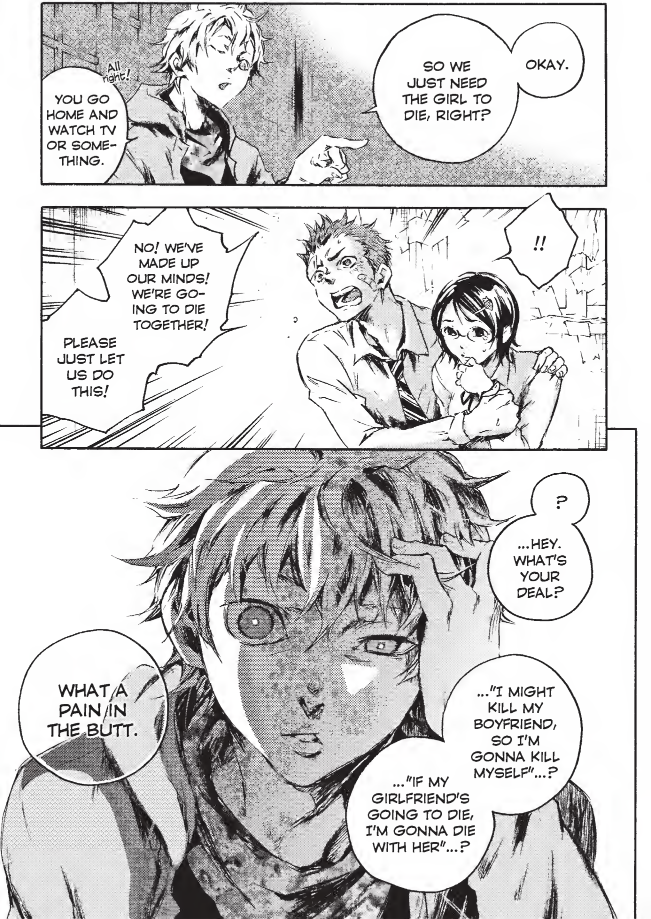

...I'M SORRY. THE WINDOW WAS OPEN, SO WE LET OURSELVES IN.
IT'S BEEN EMPTY FOR AGES.
WHEN DID YOU START USING IT?
ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO...
EVERY DAY?
NOT *EVERY* DAY, BUT A LOT...
HEH.
WHAT DO YOU DO? THERE'S NOTHING IN HERE.
...
...
IRK
ムカッ

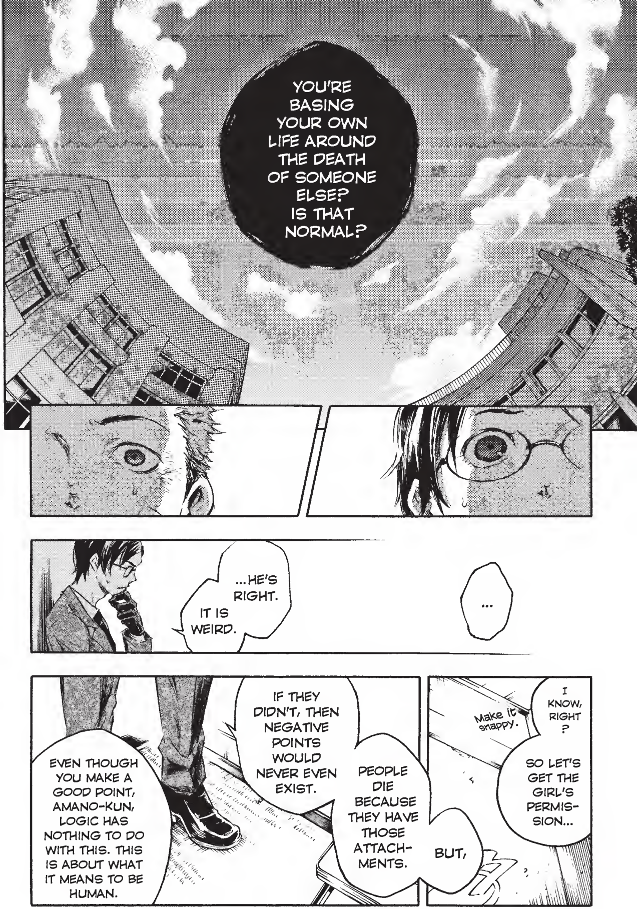

...AND WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO COMMIT SUICIDE?
I MEAN... WITH ALL THESE PITCH BLACK PSYCHOLITHS, ANYBODY WOULD GO CRAZY IF THEY CAME HERE ALL THE TIME, BUT...
RATTLE...
I...
I...DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME...
I LOVE MIYAHARA-KUN SO MUCH.
BUT I KEEP TRYING TO KILL HIM.
WHAT?
IS THAT HOW YOU GOT THOSE INJURIES?
...

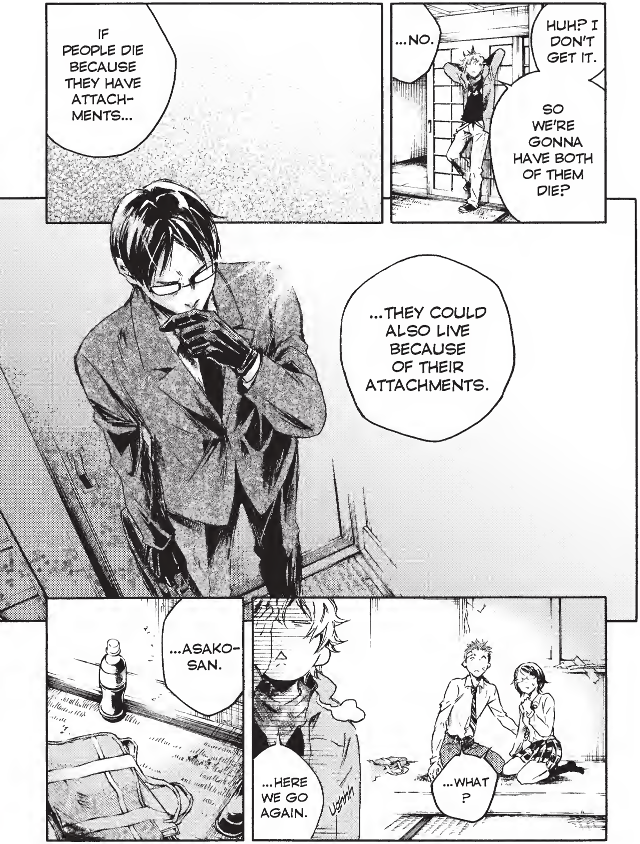

A LITTLE WHILE AGO... ASAKO STARTED RANDOMLY ATTACKING ME.
...WHILE WE WERE DOING IT.
DOING WHAT?
MRPH
モガッ
IT WAS LIKE...I JUST STARTED HATING HIM...
AND I THOUGHT, "I HAVE TO KILL THIS MAN"...

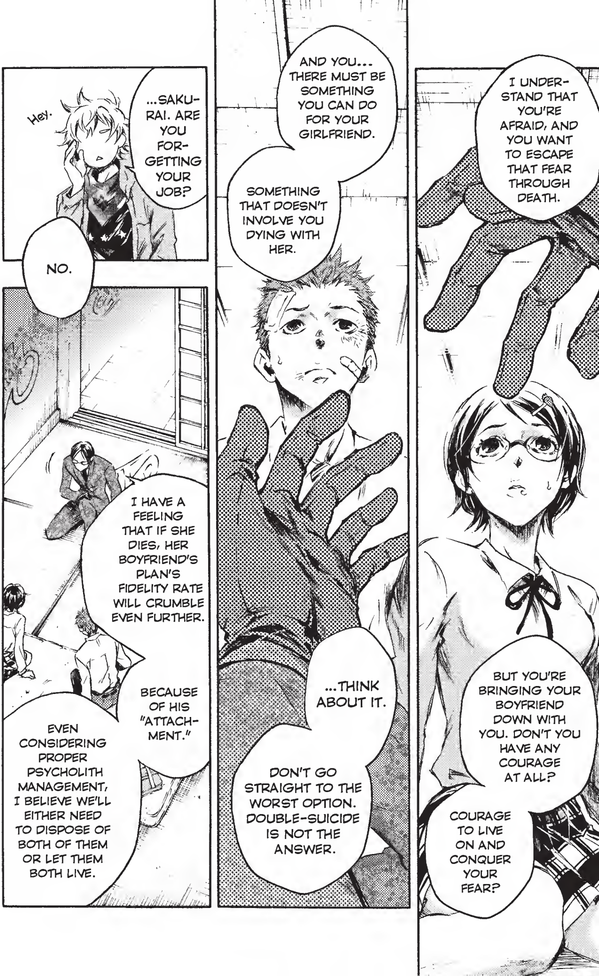

THREE DAYS AGO, I ALMOST DID KILL HIM.
I'M...SO SCARED.
I'M AFRAID OF MYSELF.

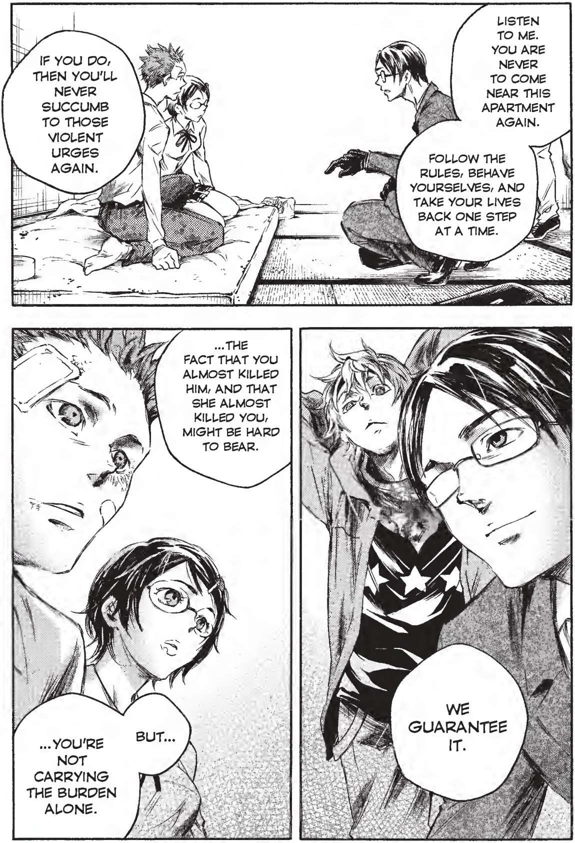

I JUST... WISHED I WOULD DIE.
BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO LET HER DIE ALONE.
SO...
...I WAS GOING TO GO WITH HER.
...I SEE.
WHAT DOES THE CAMERA SAY?
THE BOYFRIEND IS DOING OKAY.
...BUT THE GIRL'S PLAN IS TOO FAR OFF COURSE.
525661 HOURS
TY RATE: 5
...THIS NEGATIVE POINT WAS PROBABLY CREATED BY A WOMAN'S SOUL.
THAT'S WHY IT AFFECTED HER SO STRONGLY.

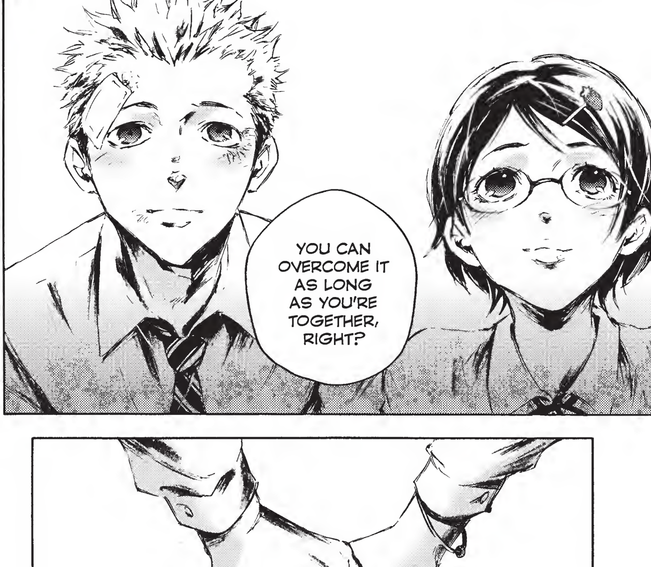

OKAY.
SO WE JUST NEED THE GIRL TO DIE, RIGHT?
All right!
YOU GO HOME AND WATCH TV OR SOMETHING.
!!
NO! WE'VE MADE UP OUR MINDS! WE'RE GOING TO DIE TOGETHER!
PLEASE JUST LET US DO THIS!
?
...HEY. WHAT'S YOUR DEAL?
..."I MIGHT KILL MY BOYFRIEND, SO I'M GONNA KILL MYSELF"...?
..."IF MY GIRLFRIEND'S GOING TO DIE, I'M GONNA DIE WITH HER"...?
WHAT A PAIN IN THE BUTT.

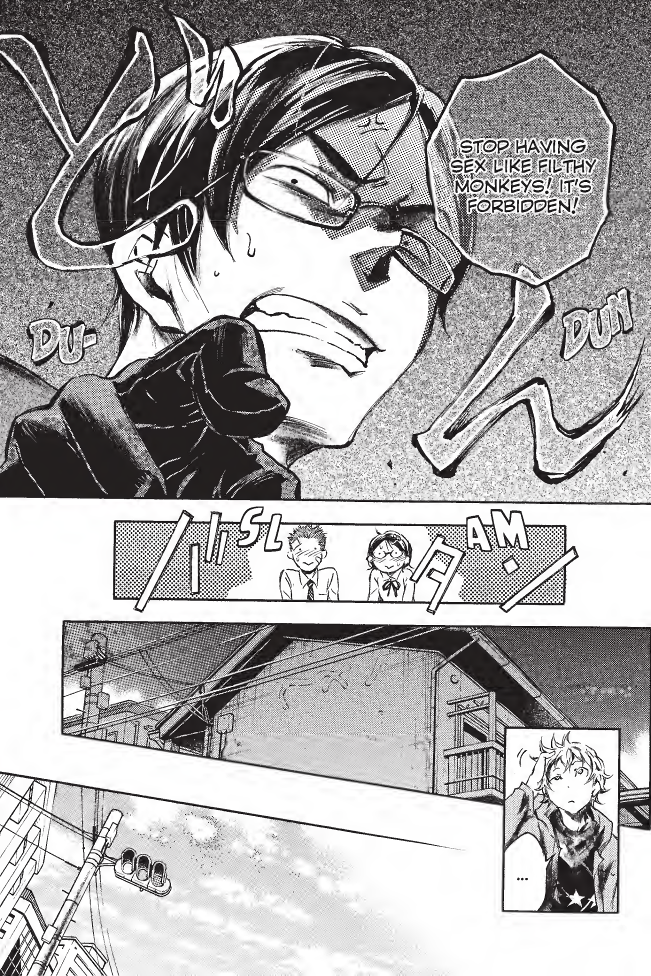

YOU'RE BASING YOUR OWN LIFE AROUND THE DEATH OF SOMEONE ELSE? IS THAT NORMAL?
...
...HE'S RIGHT. IT IS WEIRD.
I KNOW, RIGHT?
Make it snappy.
SO LET'S GET THE GIRL'S PERMISSION...
BUT,
PEOPLE DIE BECAUSE THEY HAVE THOSE ATTACHMENTS.
IF THEY DIDN'T, THEN NEGATIVE POINTS WOULD NEVER EVEN EXIST.
EVEN THOUGH YOU MAKE A GOOD POINT, AMANO-KUN, LOGIC HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS. THIS IS ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HUMAN.

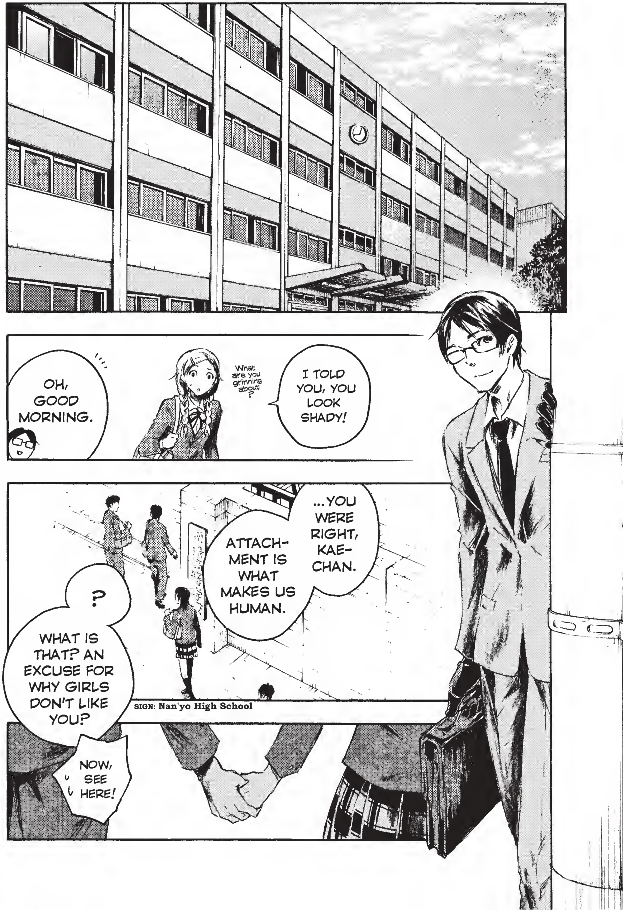

HUH? I DON'T GET IT.
SO WE'RE GONNA HAVE BOTH OF THEM DIE?
...NO.
IF PEOPLE DIE BECAUSE THEY HAVE ATTACHMENTS...
...THEY COULD ALSO LIVE BECAUSE OF THEIR ATTACHMENTS.
...WHAT?
Ughhh
...HERE WE GO AGAIN.
...ASAKO-SAN.


I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU'RE AFRAID, AND YOU WANT TO ESCAPE THAT FEAR THROUGH DEATH.
BUT YOU'RE BRINGING YOUR BOYFRIEND DOWN WITH YOU. DON'T YOU HAVE ANY COURAGE AT ALL?
COURAGE TO LIVE ON AND CONQUER YOUR FEAR?
AND YOU... THERE MUST BE SOMETHING YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR GIRLFRIEND.
SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T INVOLVE YOU DYING WITH HER.
...THINK ABOUT IT.
DON'T GO STRAIGHT TO THE WORST OPTION. DOUBLE-SUICIDE IS NOT THE ANSWER.
...SAKURAI. ARE YOU FORGETTING YOUR JOB?
Hey.
NO.
I HAVE A FEELING THAT IF SHE DIES, HER BOYFRIEND'S PLAN'S FIDELITY RATE WILL CRUMBLE EVEN FURTHER.
BECAUSE OF HIS "ATTACHMENT."
EVEN CONSIDERING PROPER PSYCHOLITH MANAGEMENT, I BELIEVE WE'LL EITHER NEED TO DISPOSE OF BOTH OF THEM OR LET THEM BOTH LIVE.

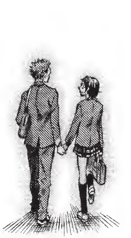

LISTEN TO ME. YOU ARE NEVER TO COME NEAR THIS APARTMENT AGAIN.
FOLLOW THE RULES, BEHAVE YOURSELVES, AND TAKE YOUR LIVES BACK ONE STEP AT A TIME.
IF YOU DO, THEN YOU'LL NEVER SUCCUMB TO THOSE VIOLENT URGES AGAIN.
...THE FACT THAT YOU ALMOST KILLED HIM, AND THAT SHE ALMOST KILLED YOU, MIGHT BE HARD TO BEAR.
BUT...
...YOU'RE NOT CARRYING THE BURDEN ALONE.
WE GUARANTEE IT.

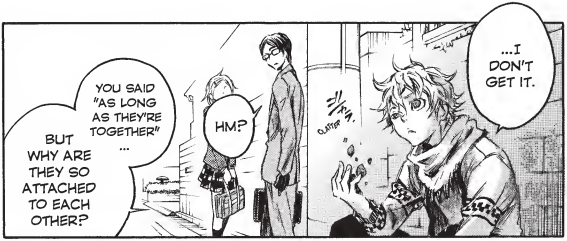

YOU CAN OVERCOME IT AS LONG AS YOU'RE TOGETHER, RIGHT?
RIGHT!
OH, AND ...

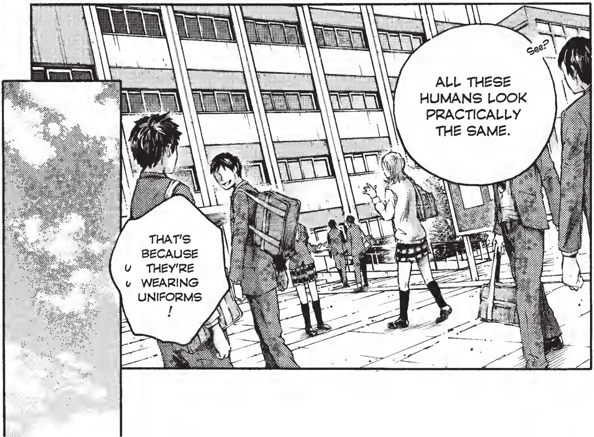

STOP HAVING SEX LIKE FILTHY MONKEYS! IT'S FORBIDDEN!
DU-
DUN
SLAM!
...

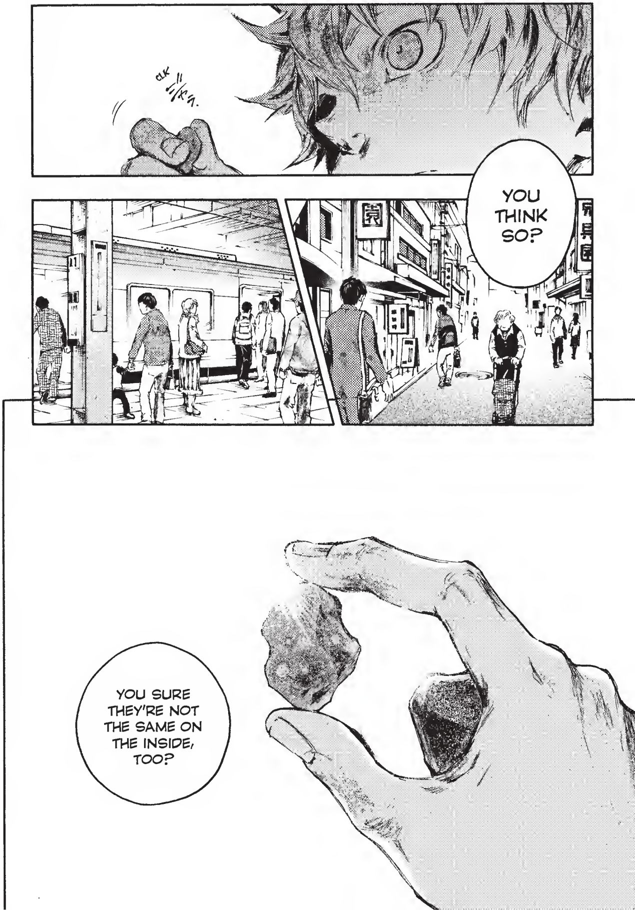

OH, GOOD MORNING.
What are you grinning about?
I TOLD YOU, YOU LOOK SHADY!
...YOU WERE RIGHT, KAE-CHAN.
ATTACHMENT IS WHAT MAKES US HUMAN.
?
WHAT IS THAT? AN EXCUSE FOR WHY GIRLS DON'T LIKE YOU?
NOW, SEE HERE!

SIGN: Nan'yo High School

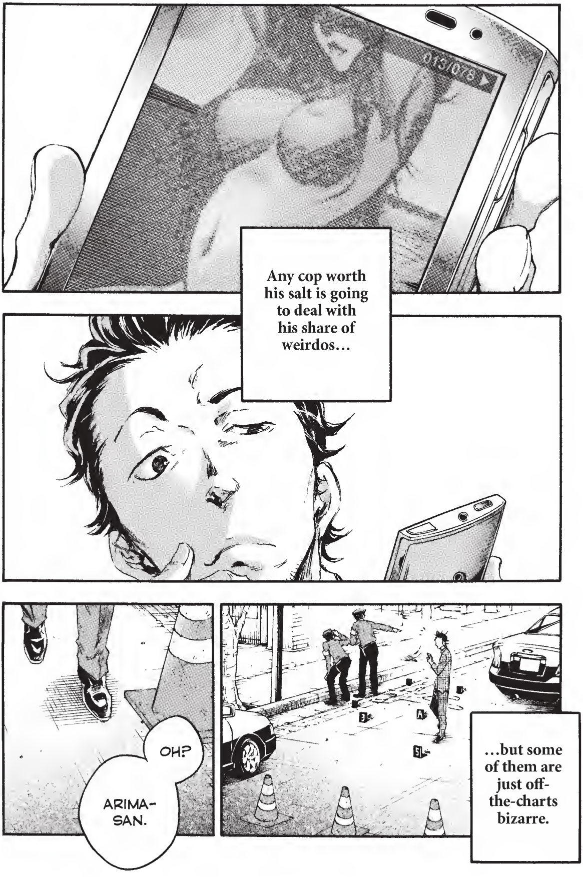


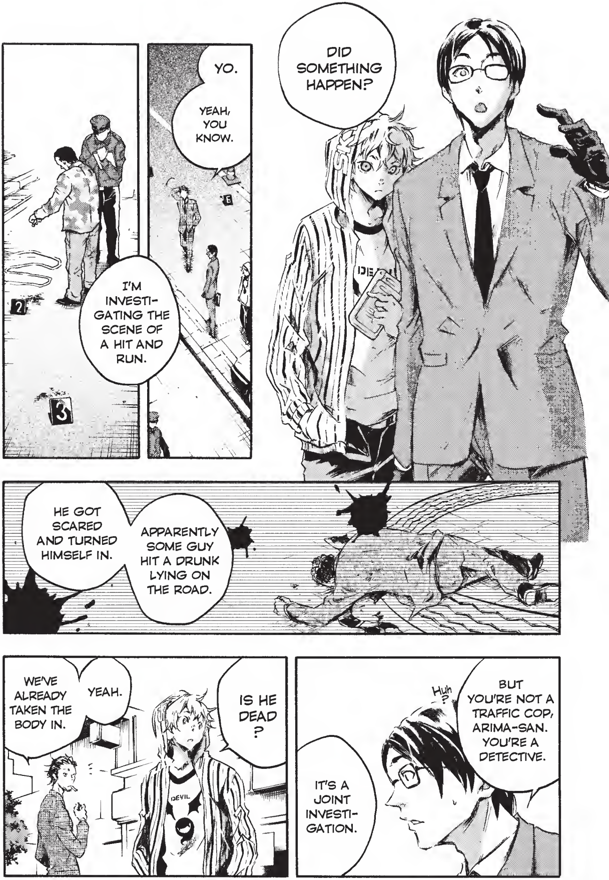

...I DON'T GET IT.
CLATTER
HM?
YOU SAID "AS LONG AS THEY'RE TOGETHER"...
BUT WHY ARE THEY SO ATTACHED TO EACH OTHER?

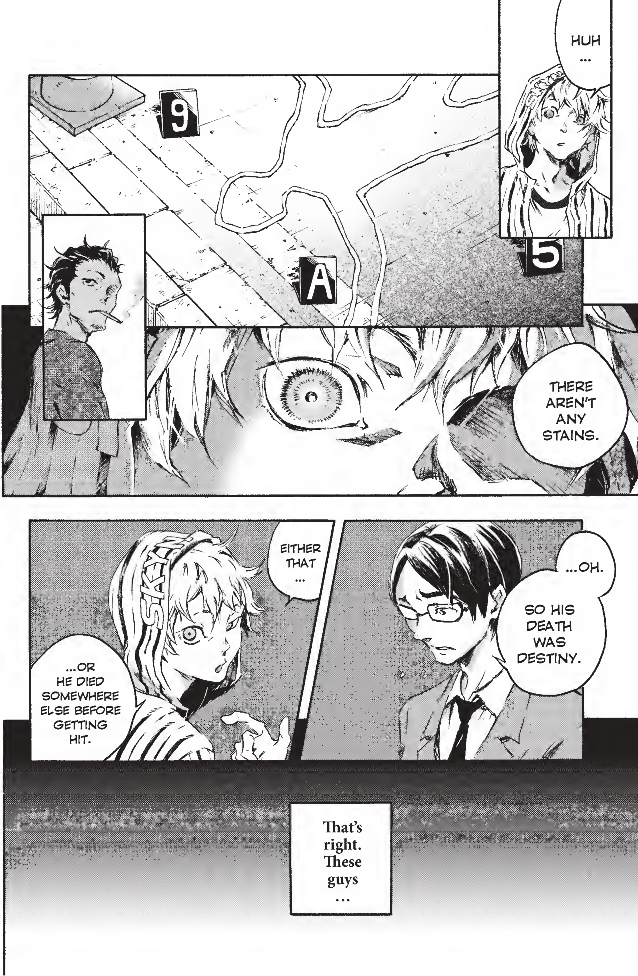

See?
ALL THESE HUMANS LOOK PRACTICALLY THE SAME.
THAT'S BECAUSE THEY'RE WEARING UNIFORMS!

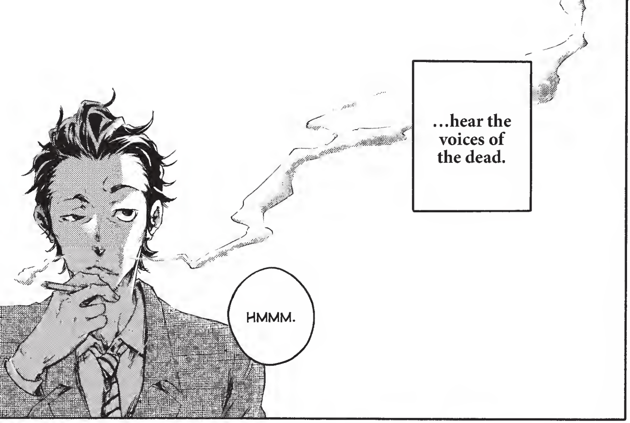

CLK
ジャラ.
YOU THINK SO?
YOU SURE THEY'RE NOT THE SAME ON THE INSIDE, TOO?

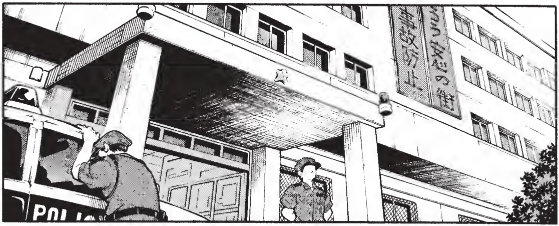
Chapter 7 ✚ The Rewards of Cleaning Up Someone Else's Mess


013/078
Any cop worth his salt is going to deal with his share of weirdos…
OH?
ARIMA-SAN.
…but some of them are just off-the-charts bizarre.

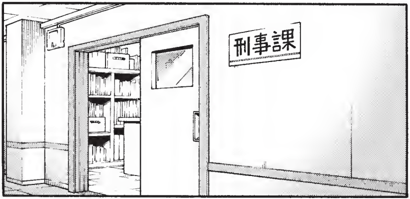

DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?
YO.
YEAH, YOU KNOW.
I'M INVESTIGATING THE SCENE OF A HIT AND RUN.
APPARENTLY SOME GUY HIT A DRUNK LYING ON THE ROAD.
HE GOT SCARED AND TURNED HIMSELF IN.
IS HE DEAD?
YEAH.
WE'VE ALREADY TAKEN THE BODY IN.
DEVIL
BUT YOU'RE NOT A TRAFFIC COP, ARIMA-SAN. YOU'RE A DETECTIVE.
Huh?
IT'S A JOINT INVESTIGATION.

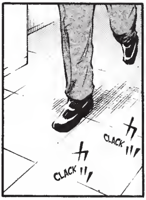

HUH ...
9
A
5
THERE AREN'T ANY STAINS.
...OH.
SO HIS DEATH WAS DESTINY.
EITHER THAT ...
...OR HE DIED SOMEWHERE ELSE BEFORE GETTING HIT.
That's right. These guys ...


...hear the voices of the dead.
HMMM.

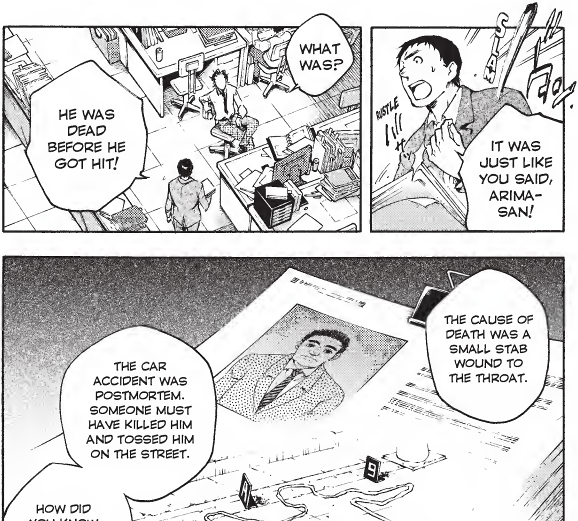


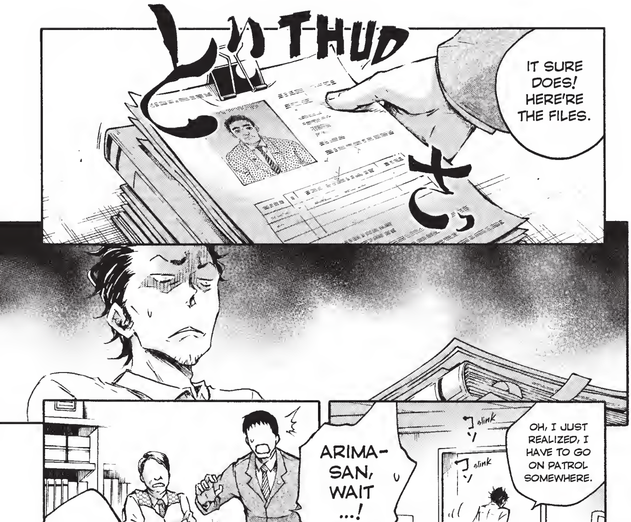
SIGN (LEFT): Accident prevention **SIGN (RIGHT):** Keep our town safe

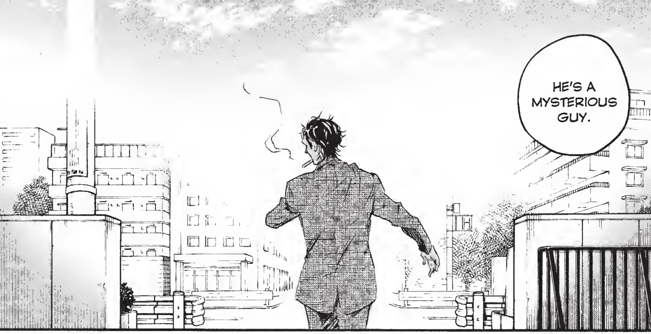


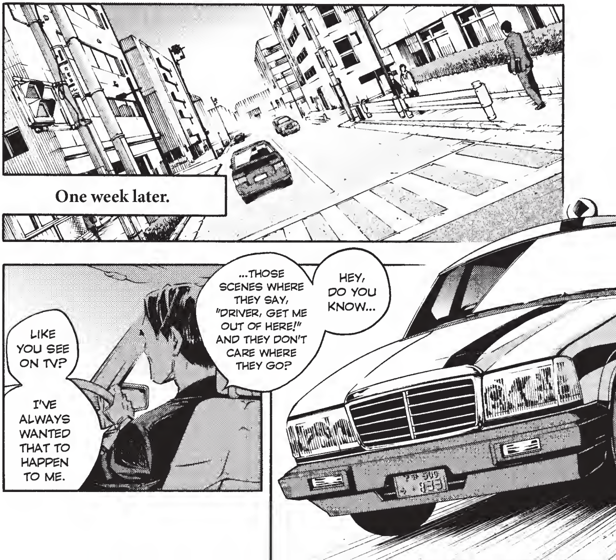

CLACK
CLACK

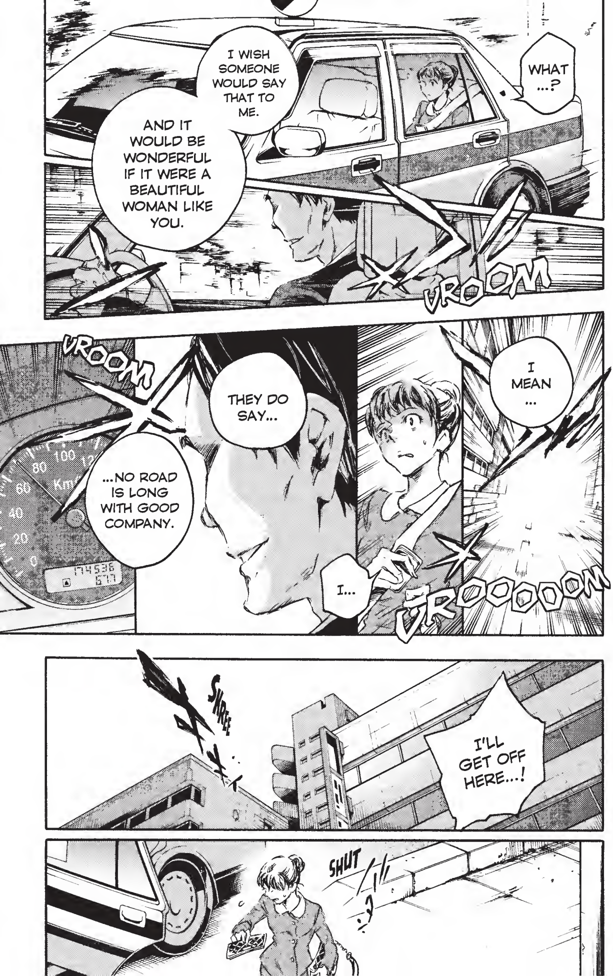
SIGN: Criminal Investigation Division

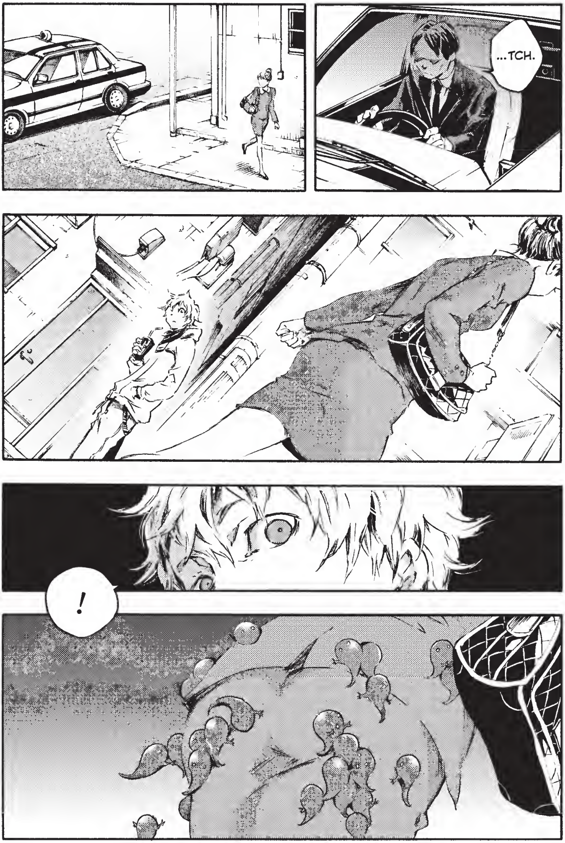

RUSTLE
IT WAS JUST LIKE YOU SAID, ARIMA-SAN!
WHAT WAS?
HE WAS DEAD BEFORE HE GOT HIT!
THE CAUSE OF DEATH WAS A SMALL STAB WOUND TO THE THROAT.
THE CAR ACCIDENT WAS POSTMORTEM. SOMEONE MUST HAVE KILLED HIM AND TOSSED HIM ON THE STREET.
HOW DID YOU KNOW IT WASN'T JUST A HIT-AND-RUN?
How did I know ...?
...DETECTIVE'S INTUITION?
AH HA HA.
THAT'S SOME INTUITION!
ANYWAY, NOW THIS IS A MURDER AND BODY DUMPING CASE.
WHICH MEANS WE HAVE MORE WORK TO DO?

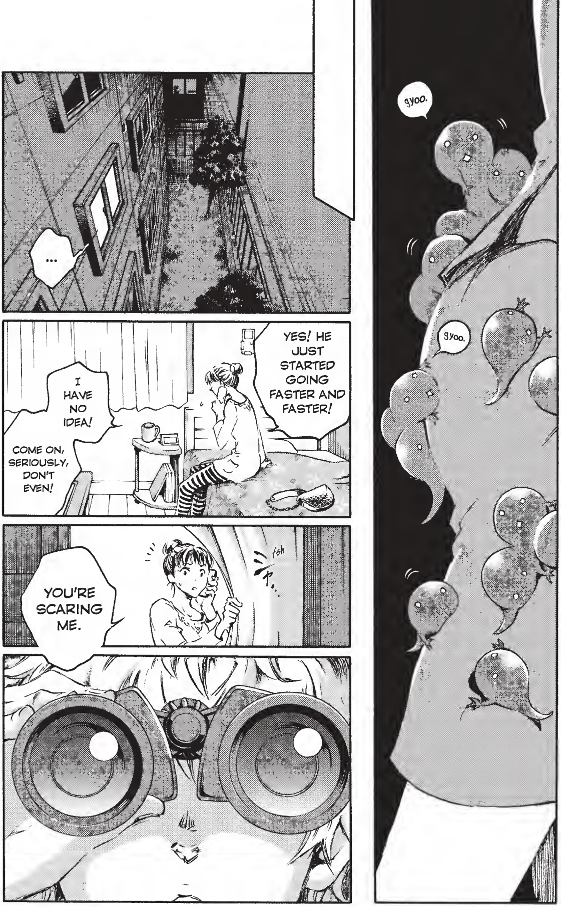

THUD
IT SURE DOES! HERE'RE THE FILES.
slink
slink
OH, I JUST REALIZED, I HAVE TO GO ON PATROL SOMEWHERE.
ARIMA-SAN, WAIT ...!
GOING TO PLAY HOOKY AGAIN?
BUT HE UNCOVERED THIS CASE. ...WHY WOULD HE AVOID IT?
HE'S ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THAT.
BUT AS MUCH AS I HATE TO ADMIT IT, I HAVE TO SAY, HE'S GOOD AT HIS JOB.
HE SURE IS. SOMEHOW HE MANAGES TO GET THE BEST CLUES.

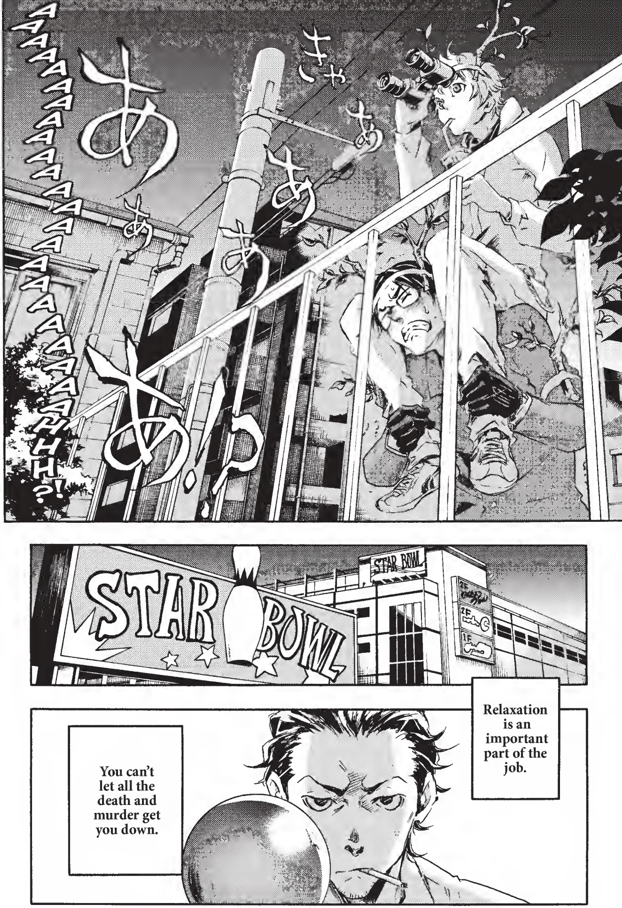

HE'S A MYSTERIOUS GUY.

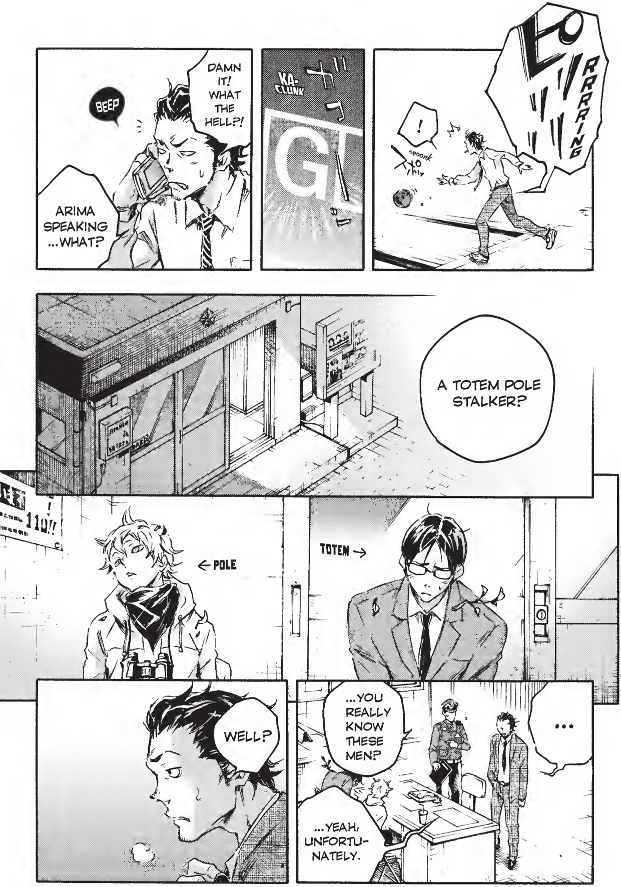

One week later.
HEY, DO YOU KNOW...
...THOSE SCENES WHERE THEY SAY, "DRIVER, GET ME OUT OF HERE!" AND THEY DON'T CARE WHERE THEY GO?
LIKE YOU SEE ON TV?
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED THAT TO HAPPEN TO ME.

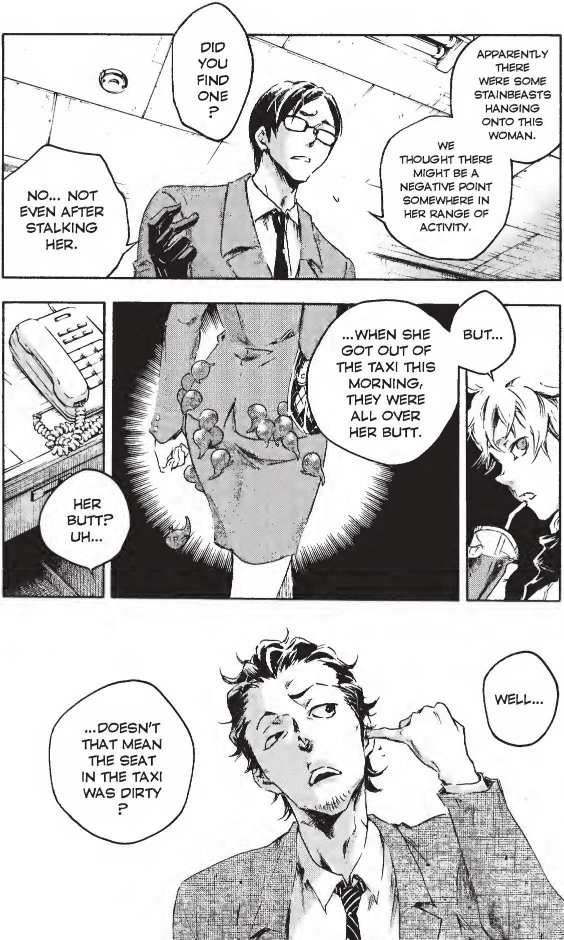

WHAT ...?
I WISH SOMEONE WOULD SAY THAT TO ME.
AND IT WOULD BE WONDERFUL IF IT WERE A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN LIKE YOU.
VROOM
I MEAN ...
VROOOOOM
I...
THEY DO SAY...
...NO ROAD IS LONG WITH GOOD COMPANY.
VROOM
174536
67.7
I'LL GET OFF HERE...!
SKREE
SHUT

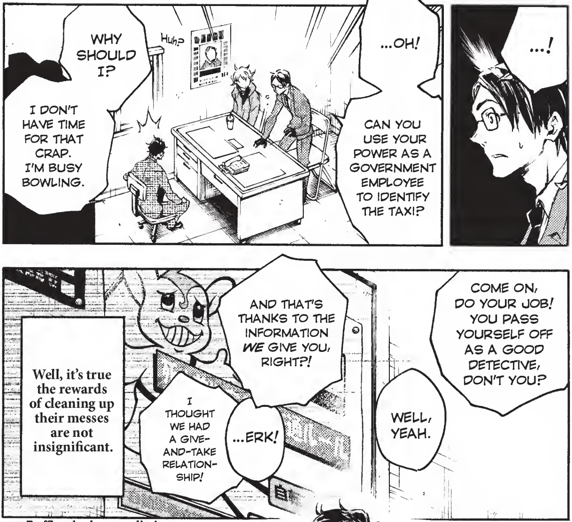

...TCH.
!


gyoo.
gyoo.
...
YES! HE JUST STARTED GOING FASTER AND FASTER!
I HAVE NO IDEA!
COME ON, SERIOUSLY, DON'T EVEN!
シャ...
fsh
YOU'RE SCARING ME.

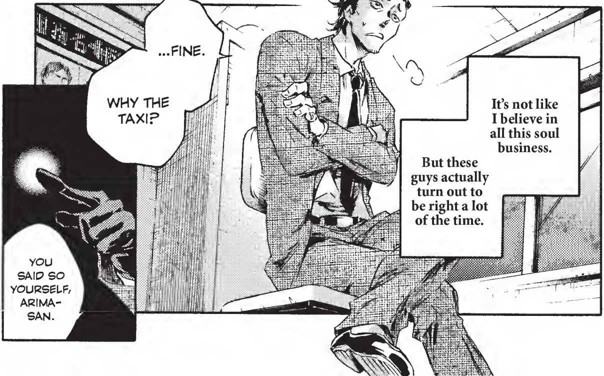

きゃあああああああ!?
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHH?!
STAR BOWL
STAR BOWL
2F
2F
1F
Relaxation is an important part of the job.
You can't let all the death and murder get you down.

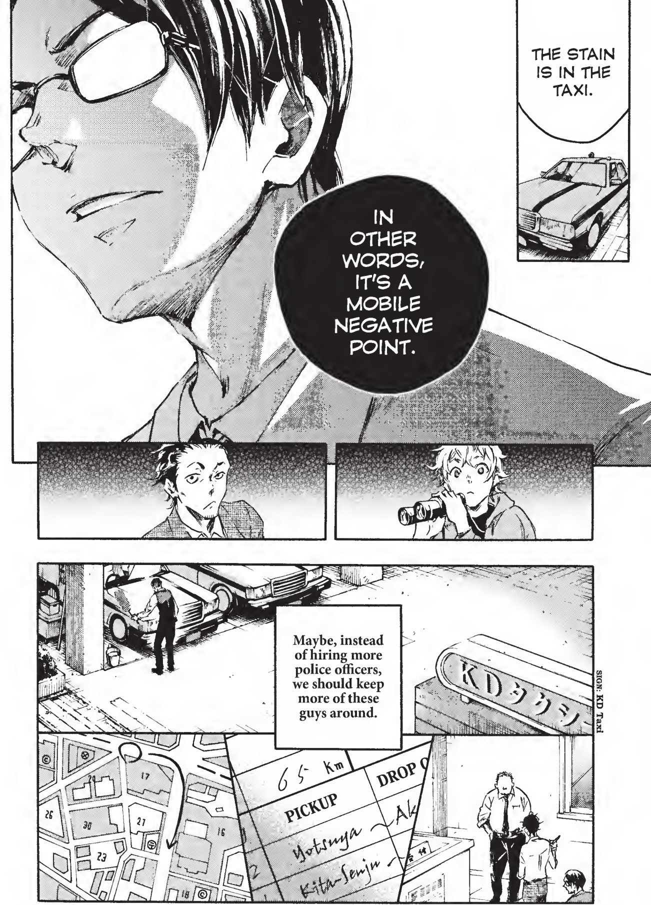

RRRRING
!
spoonk
KA-CLUNK
DAMN IT! WHAT THE HELL?!
BEEP
ARIMA SPEAKING ...WHAT?
A TOTEM POLE STALKER?
110!!
TOTEM →
← POLE
...
...YOU REALLY KNOW THESE MEN?
...YEAH, UNFORTUNATELY.
WELL?


APPARENTLY THERE WERE SOME STAINBEASTS HANGING ONTO THIS WOMAN.
WE THOUGHT THERE MIGHT BE A NEGATIVE POINT SOMEWHERE IN HER RANGE OF ACTIVITY.
DID YOU FIND ONE?
NO... NOT EVEN AFTER STALKING HER.
BUT...
...WHEN SHE GOT OUT OF THE TAXI THIS MORNING, THEY WERE ALL OVER HER BUTT.
HER BUTT? UH...
WELL...
...DOESN'T THAT MEAN THE SEAT IN THE TAXI WAS DIRTY?


...!
...OH!
CAN YOU USE YOUR POWER AS A GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE TO IDENTIFY THE TAXI?
Huh?
WHY SHOULD I?
I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THAT CRAP. I'M BUSY BOWLING.
COME ON, DO YOUR JOB! YOU PASS YOURSELF OFF AS A GOOD DETECTIVE, DON'T YOU?
WELL, YEAH.
AND THAT'S THANKS TO THE INFORMATION *WE* GIVE YOU, RIGHT?!
...ERK!
I THOUGHT WE HAD A GIVE-AND-TAKE RELATIONSHIP!
Well, it's true the rewards of cleaning up their messes are not insignificant.

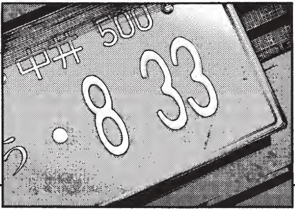
SIGN: **Traffic rules keep us alive!**


It's not like I believe in all this soul business.
But these guys actually turn out to be right a lot of the time.
...FINE.
WHY THE TAXI?
YOU SAID SO YOURSELF, ARIMA-SAN.

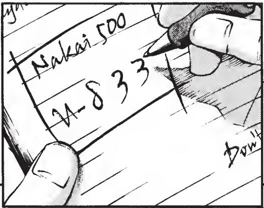

THE STAIN IS IN THE TAXI.
IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S A MOBILE NEGATIVE POINT.
Maybe, instead of hiring more police officers, we should keep more of these guys around.
KDタクシ
65 Km
DROP O
PICKUP
Yotsuya ~ Ak
Kita-Senju

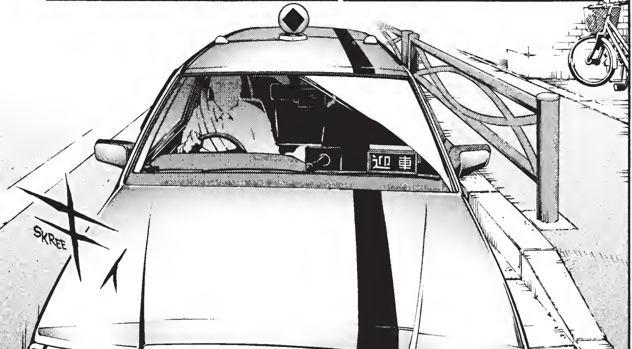
SIGN: KD Taxi

SIGN: Reception

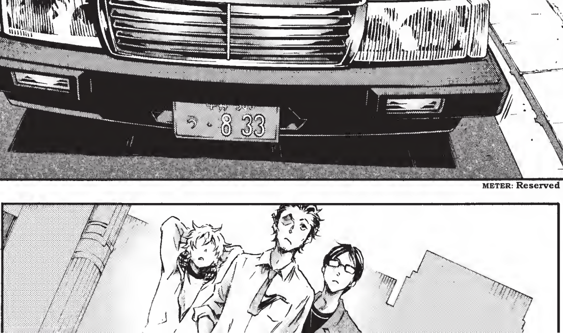


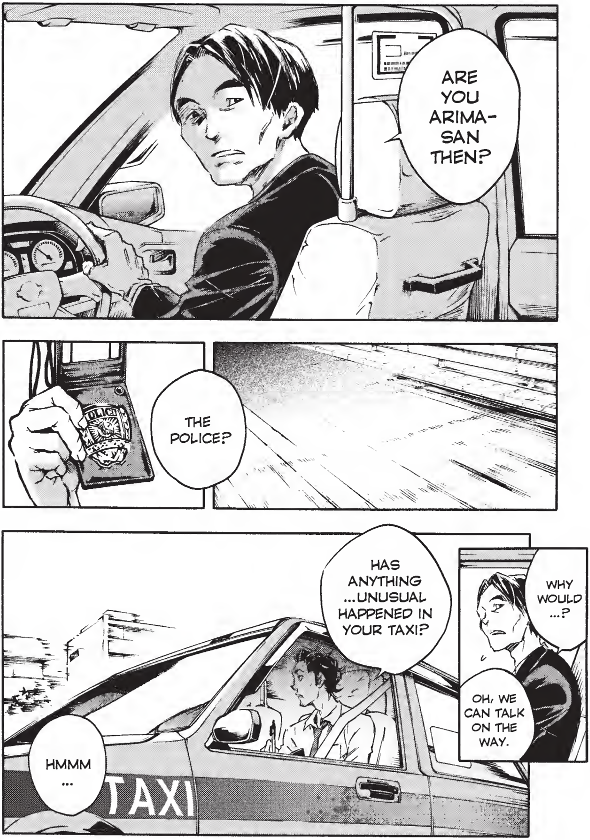
LICENSE PLATE: Nakai 500 U 8-33

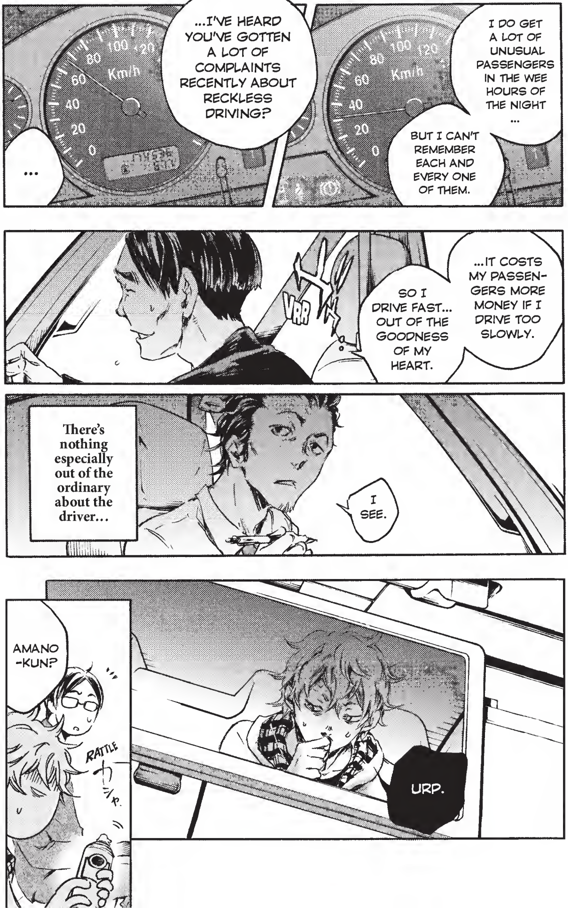

Nakai 500
U-833
Don't

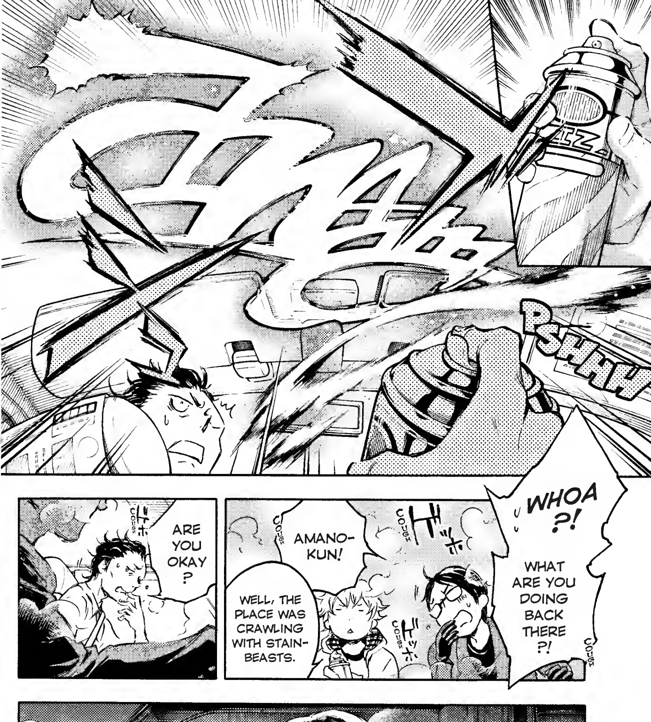

迎車
SKREE
中井 500
う・8 33

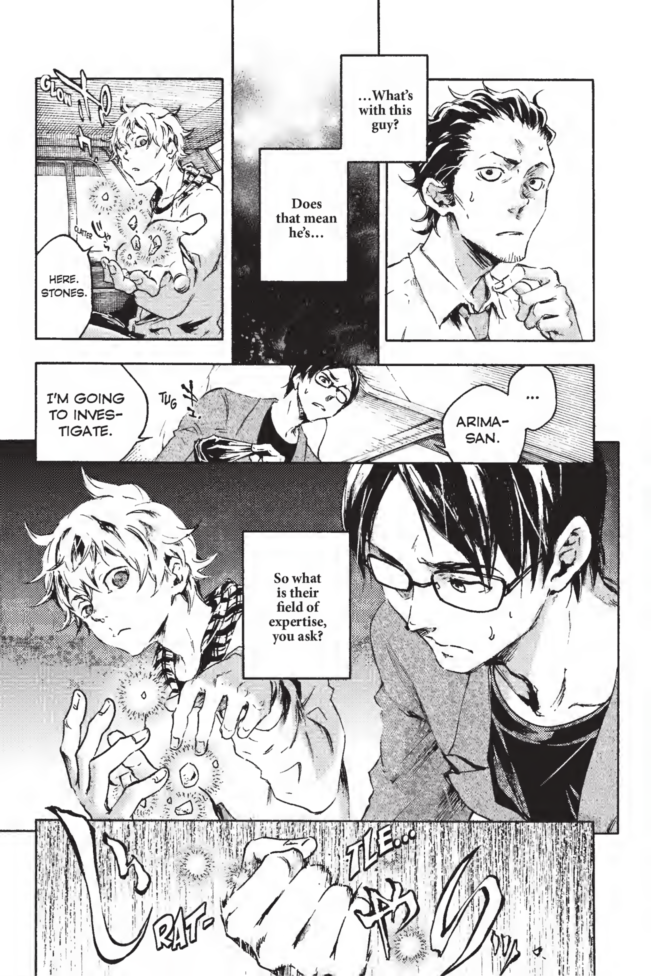
METER: Reserved

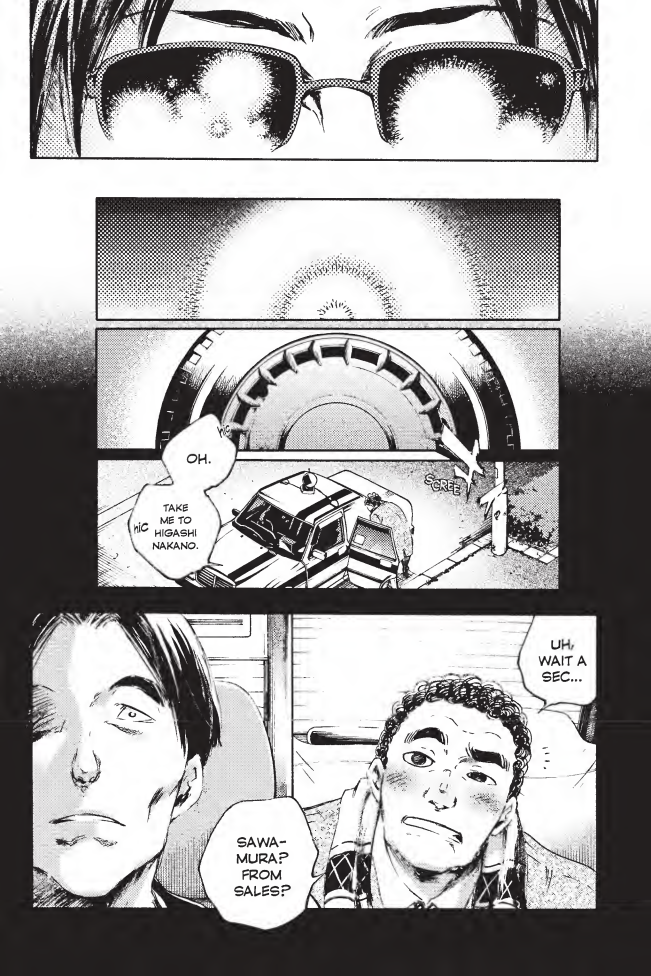


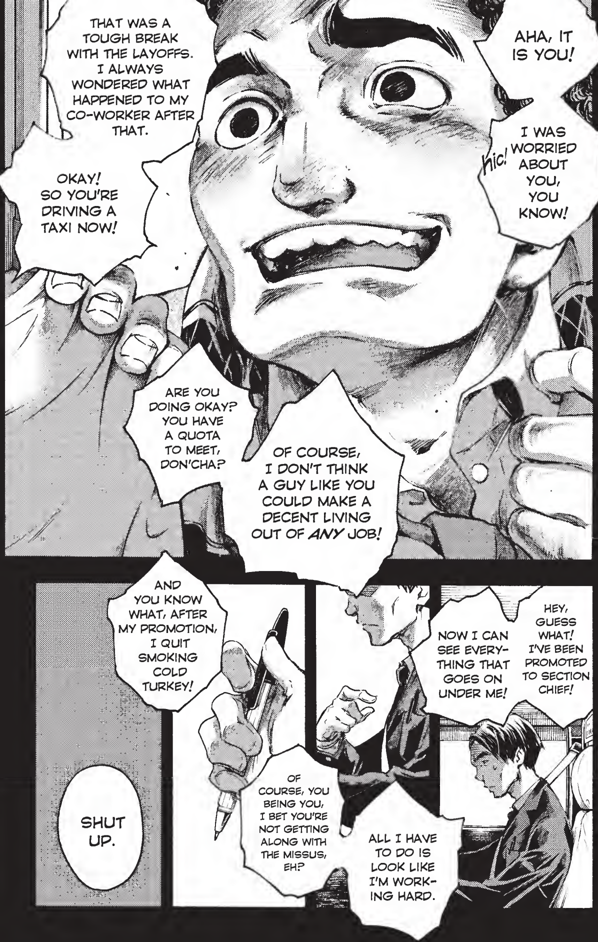

ARE YOU ARIMA-SAN THEN?
THE POLICE?
WHY WOULD ...?
OH, WE CAN TALK ON THE WAY.
HAS ANYTHING ...UNUSUAL HAPPENED IN YOUR TAXI?
HMMM ...
TAXI

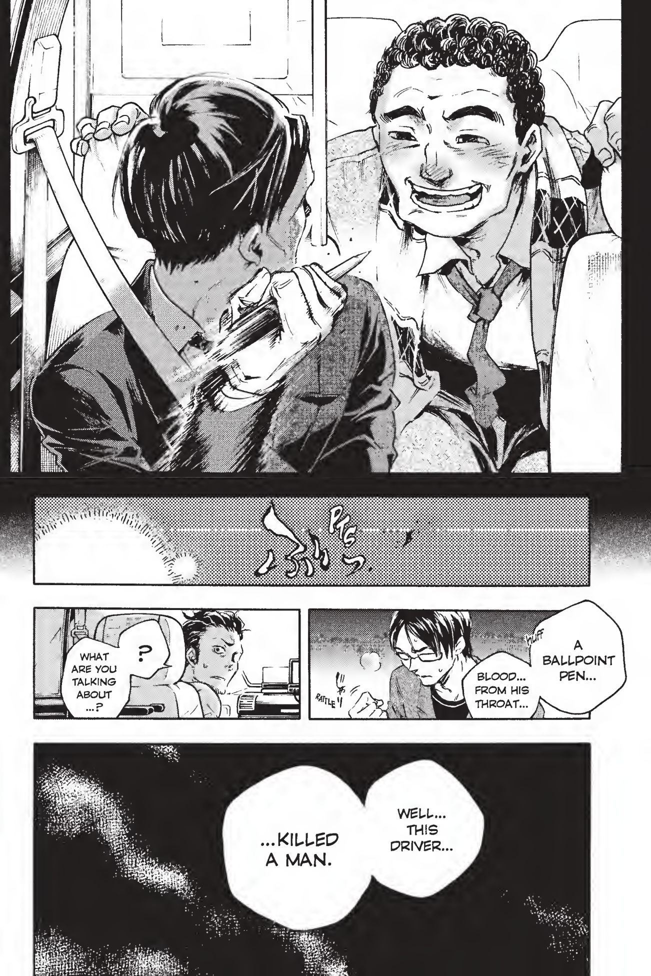

I do get a lot of unusual passengers in the wee hours of the night …
But I can't remember each and every one of them.
…I've heard you've gotten a lot of complaints recently about reckless driving?
…
…It costs my passengers more money if I drive too slowly.
So I drive fast… out of the goodness of my heart.
VRR
There's nothing especially out of the ordinary about the driver…
I see.
Urp.
Amano-kun?
RATTLE

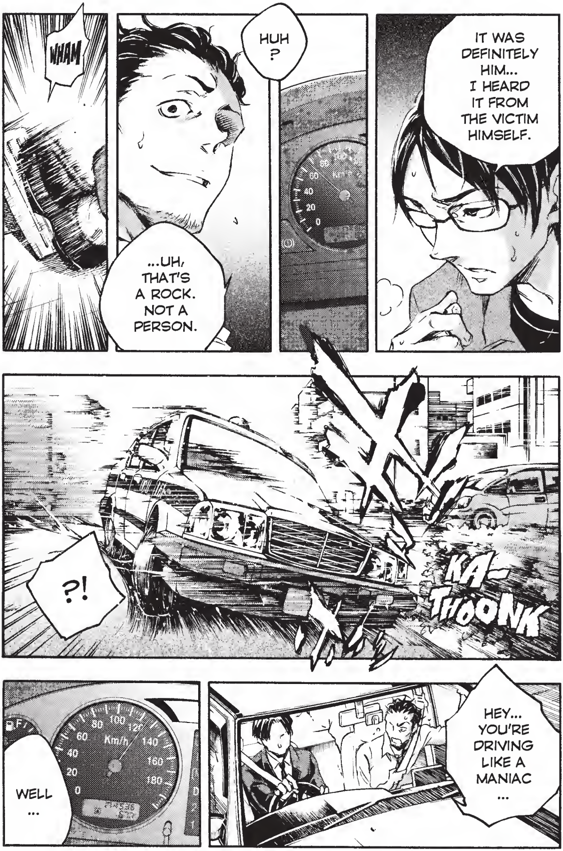

FIZZ
PSHHH
WHOA ?!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING BACK THERE ?!
COUGH
COUGH
AMANO-KUN!
COUGH
COUGH
WELL, THE PLACE WAS CRAWLING WITH STAIN-BEASTS.
COUGH
ARE YOU OKAY ?
...YES?
IS SOMETHING THE MATTER?

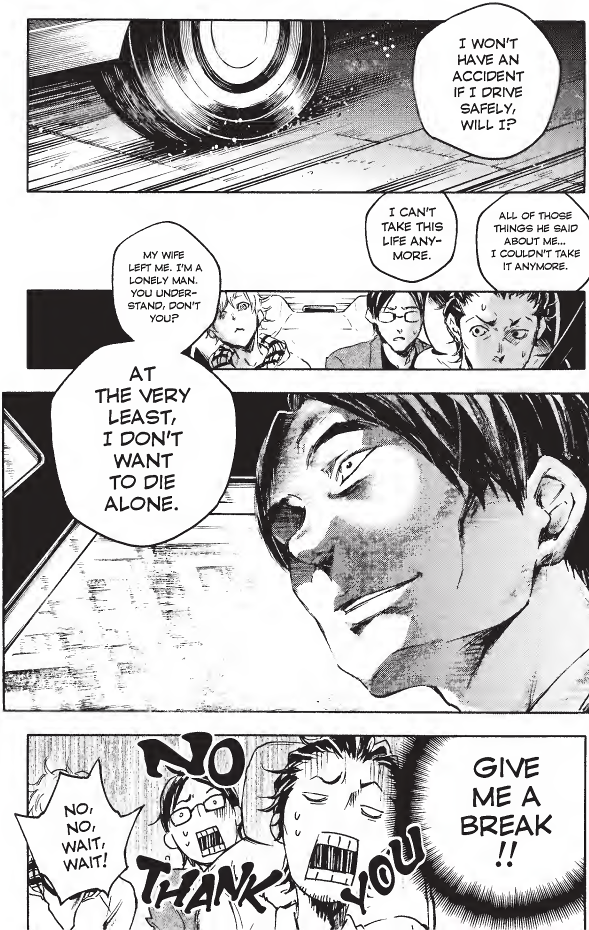

…What's with this guy?
Does that mean he's…
GLOW
CLATTER
HERE. STONES.
…
ARIMA-SAN.
TUG
I'M GOING TO INVESTIGATE.
So what is their field of expertise, you ask?
RAT-TLE…

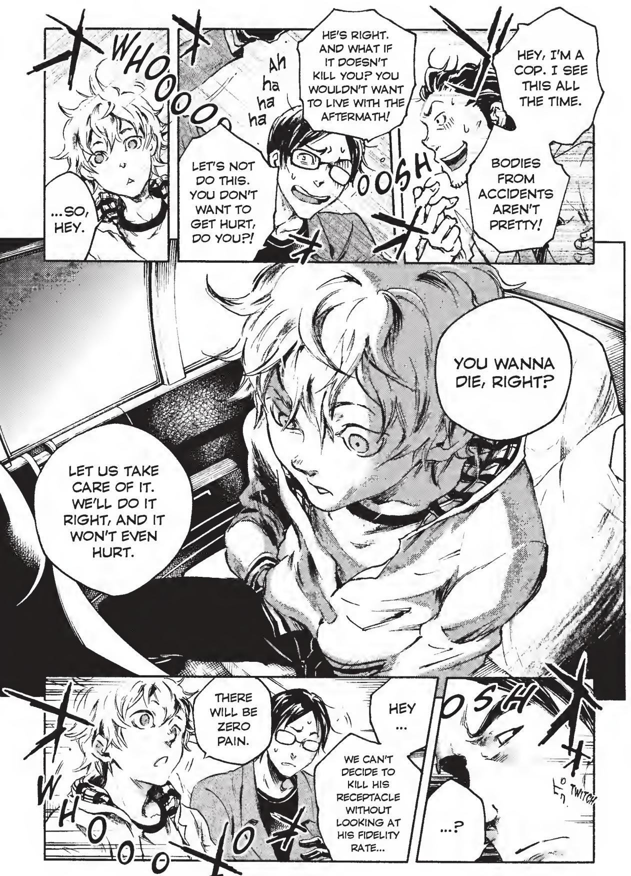

hic
OH.
SCREE
hic
TAKE ME TO HIGASHI NAKANO.
UH, WAIT A SEC...
SAWAMURA? FROM SALES?

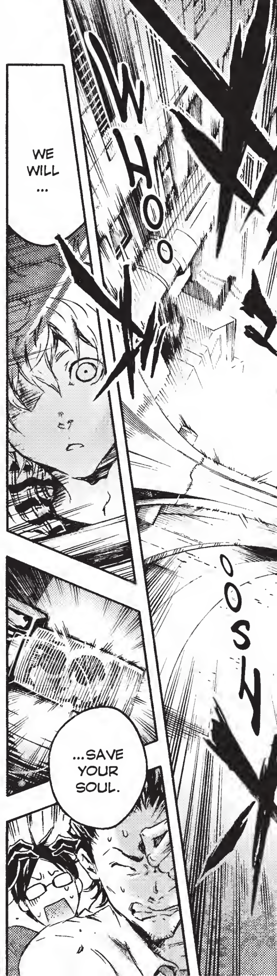

AHA, IT IS YOU!
OKAY! SO YOU'RE DRIVING A TAXI NOW!
hic!
I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU, YOU KNOW!
THAT WAS A TOUGH BREAK WITH THE LAYOFFS. I ALWAYS WONDERED WHAT HAPPENED TO MY CO-WORKER AFTER THAT.
OF COURSE, I DON'T THINK A GUY LIKE YOU COULD MAKE A DECENT LIVING OUT OF *ANY* JOB!
ARE YOU DOING OKAY? YOU HAVE A QUOTA TO MEET, DON'CHA?
HEY, GUESS WHAT! I'VE BEEN PROMOTED TO SECTION CHIEF!
NOW I CAN SEE EVERY-THING THAT GOES ON UNDER ME!
ALL I HAVE TO DO IS LOOK LIKE I'M WORKING HARD.
AND YOU KNOW WHAT, AFTER MY PROMOTION, I QUIT SMOKING COLD TURKEY!
OF COURSE, YOU BEING YOU, I BET YOU'RE NOT GETTING ALONG WITH THE MISSUS, EH?
SHUT UP.

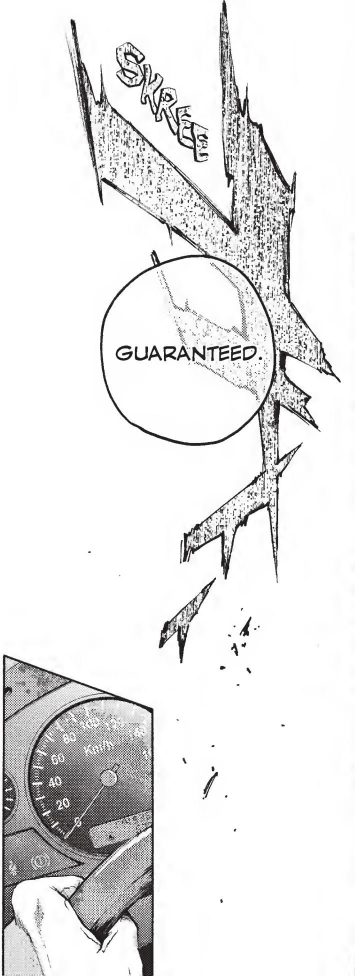

PTS
huff
A BALLPOINT PEN...
BLOOD... FROM HIS THROAT...
RATTLE
?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT ...?
WELL... THIS DRIVER...
...KILLED A MAN.

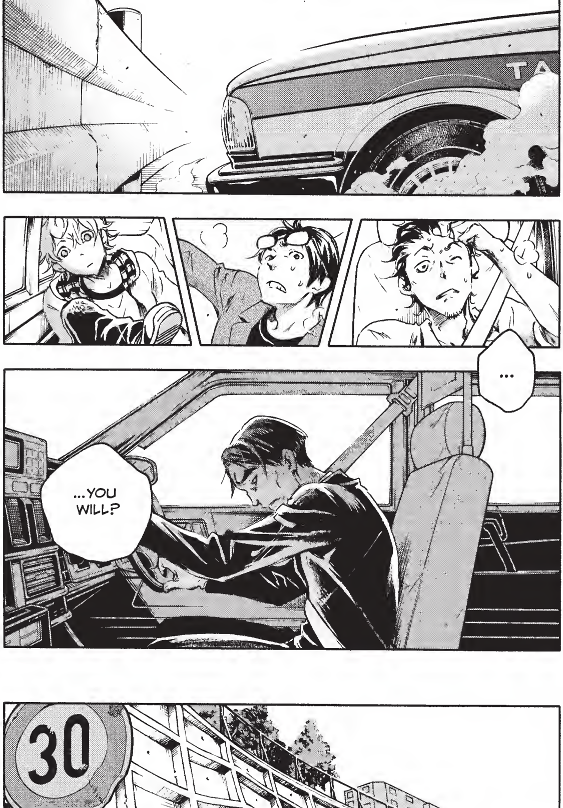

IT WAS DEFINITELY HIM... I HEARD IT FROM THE VICTIM HIMSELF.
HUH ?
...UH, THAT'S A ROCK. NOT A PERSON.
WHAM
KA-THOONK
?!
HEY... YOU'RE DRIVING LIKE A MANIAC ...
WELL ...

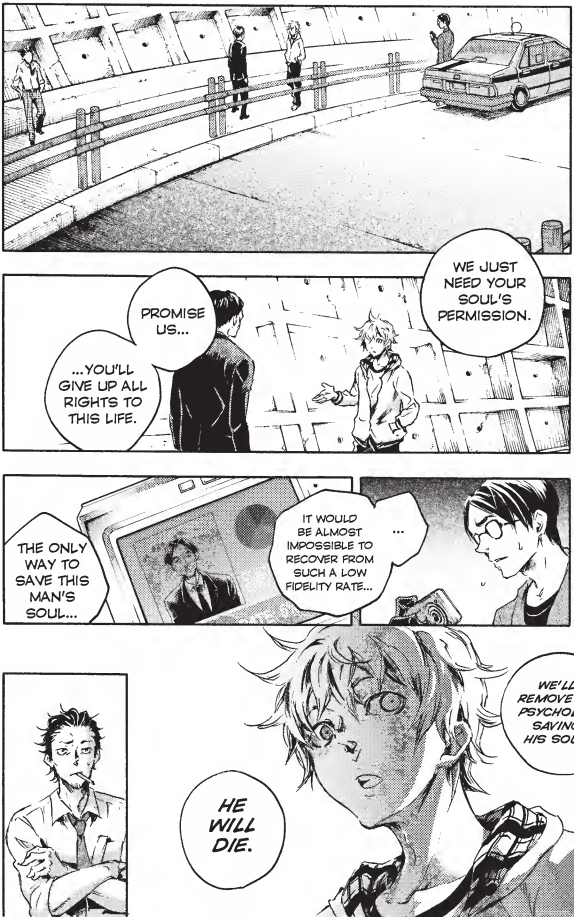

I WON'T HAVE AN ACCIDENT IF I DRIVE SAFELY, WILL I?
ALL OF THOSE THINGS HE SAID ABOUT ME... I COULDN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE.
I CAN'T TAKE THIS LIFE ANYMORE.
MY WIFE LEFT ME. I'M A LONELY MAN. YOU UNDERSTAND, DON'T YOU?
AT THE VERY LEAST, I DON'T WANT TO DIE ALONE.
GIVE ME A BREAK!!
NO THANK YOU
NO, NO, WAIT, WAIT!

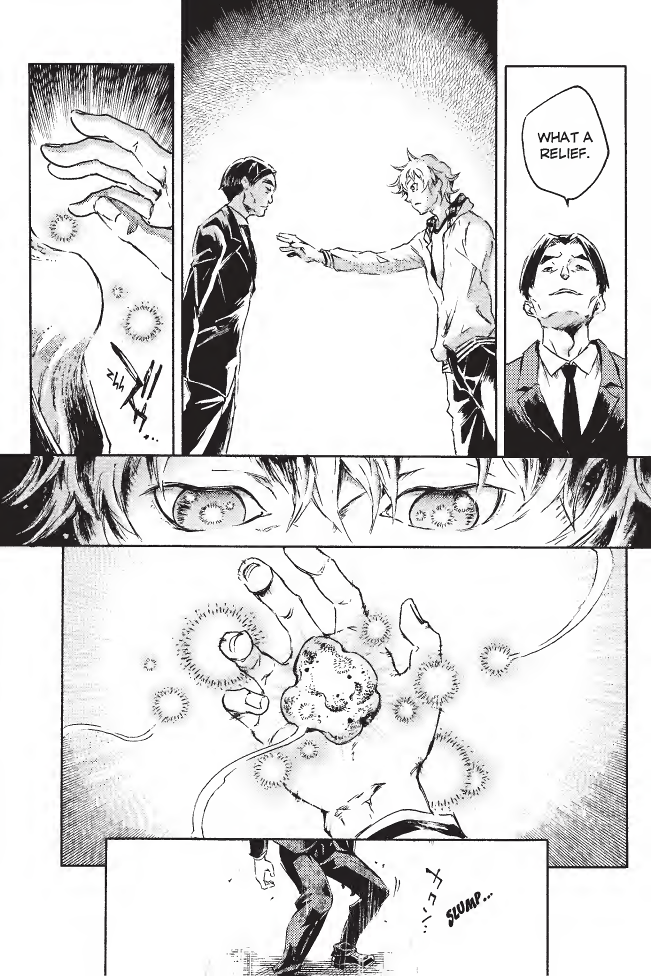

HEY, I'M A COP. I SEE THIS ALL THE TIME.
BODIES FROM ACCIDENTS AREN'T PRETTY!
HE'S RIGHT. AND WHAT IF IT DOESN'T KILL YOU? YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO LIVE WITH THE AFTERMATH!
Ah ha ha ha
OOSH
LET'S NOT DO THIS. YOU DON'T WANT TO GET HURT, DO YOU?!
WHOOOOO
...SO, HEY.
YOU WANNA DIE, RIGHT?
LET US TAKE CARE OF IT. WE'LL DO IT RIGHT, AND IT WON'T EVEN HURT.
OSH
TWITCH
...?
HEY ...
WE CAN'T DECIDE TO KILL HIS RECEPTACLE WITHOUT LOOKING AT HIS FIDELITY RATE...
THERE WILL BE ZERO PAIN.
WHOOOOO

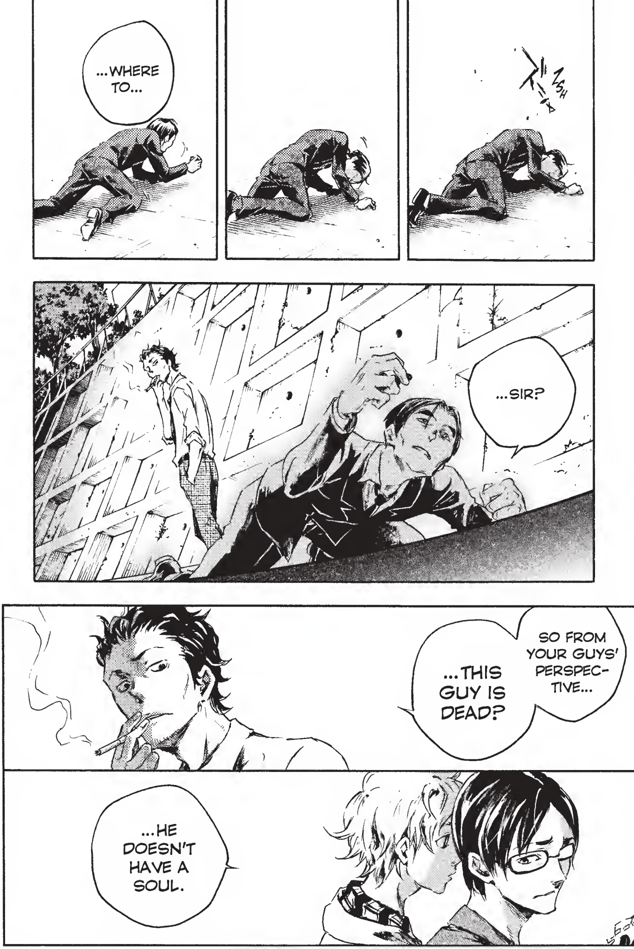

WHOOSH
WE WILL ...
...SAVE YOUR SOUL.

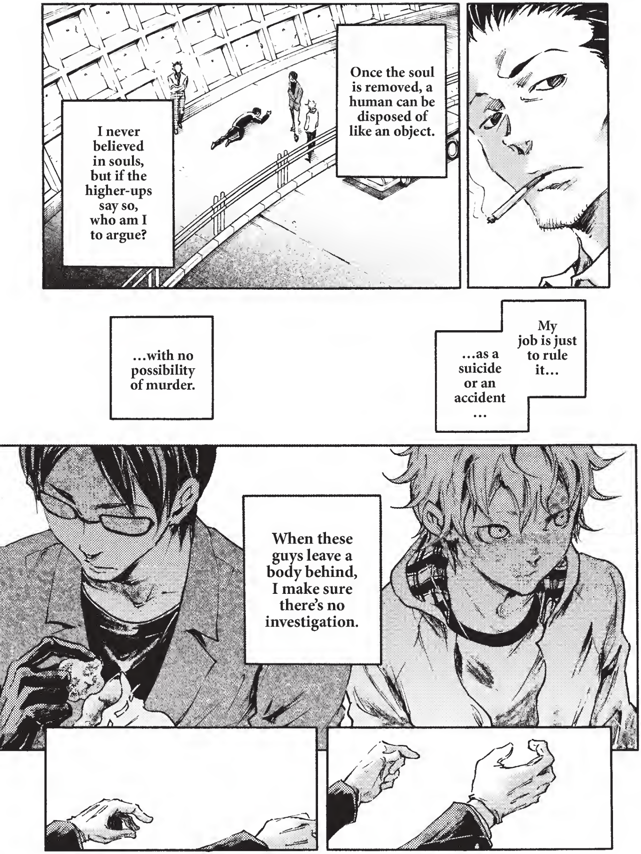

SKREE
GUARANTEED.
Km/h
0
20
40
60
80
100

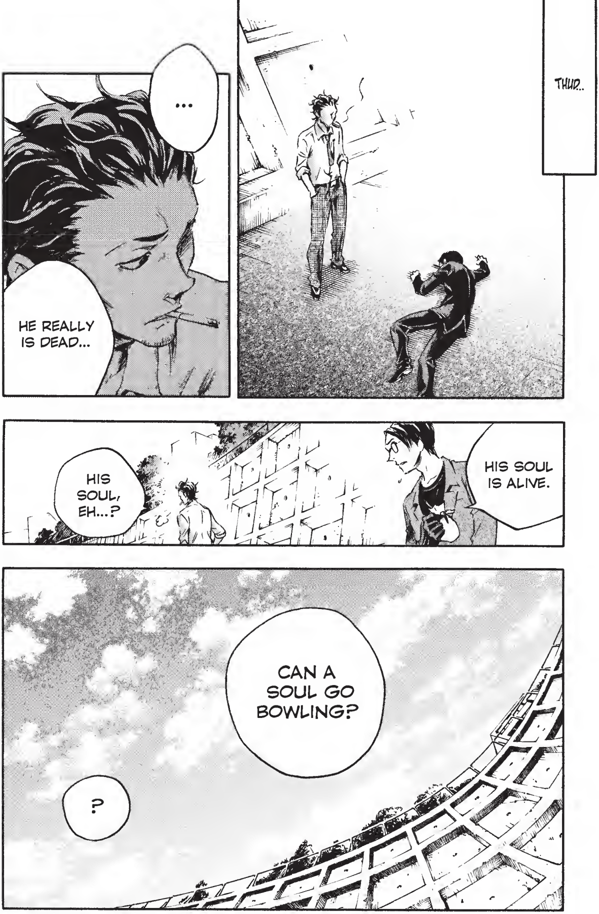

TA
...
...YOU WILL?
30

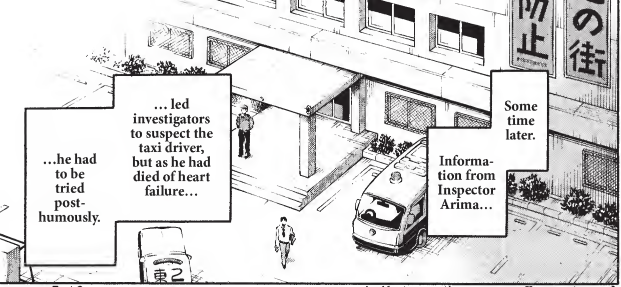

WE JUST NEED YOUR SOUL'S PERMISSION.
PROMISE US...
...YOU'LL GIVE UP ALL RIGHTS TO THIS LIFE.
...
IT WOULD BE ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO RECOVER FROM SUCH A LOW FIDELITY RATE...
THE ONLY WAY TO SAVE THIS MAN'S SOUL...
WE'LL REMOVE THE PSYCHOLITH, SAVING HIS SOUL.
HE WILL DIE.


WHAT A RELIEF.
ZHH...
SLUMP...

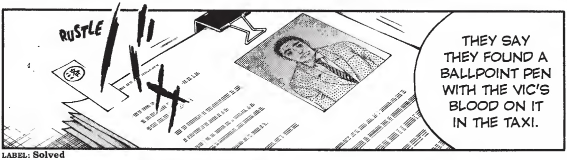

ZSH
...WHERE TO...
...SIR?
SO FROM YOUR GUYS' PERSPECTIVE...
...THIS GUY IS DEAD?
...HE DOESN'T HAVE A SOUL.


Once the soul is removed, a human can be disposed of like an object.
I never believed in souls, but if the higher-ups say so, who am I to argue?
My job is just to rule it…
…as a suicide or an accident…
…with no possibility of murder.
When these guys leave a body behind, I make sure there's no investigation.

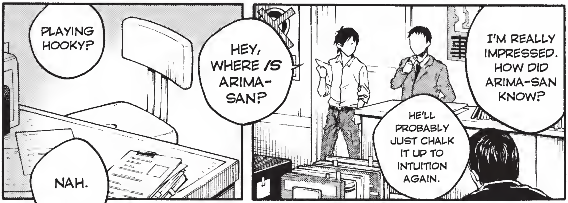

THUD..
...
HE REALLY IS DEAD...
HIS SOUL IS ALIVE.
HIS SOUL, EH...?
CAN A SOUL GO BOWLING?
?

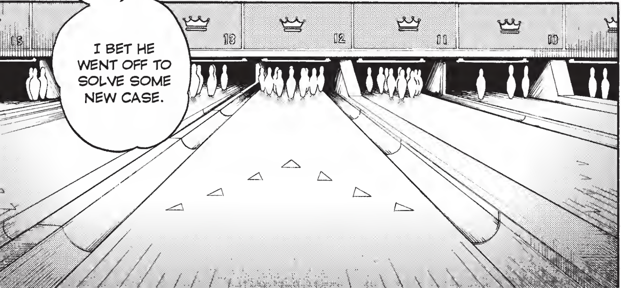

防止
の街
Some time later.
Informa-tion from Inspector Arima…
… led investigators to suspect the taxi driver, but as he had died of heart failure…
…he had to be tried posthumously.
東2

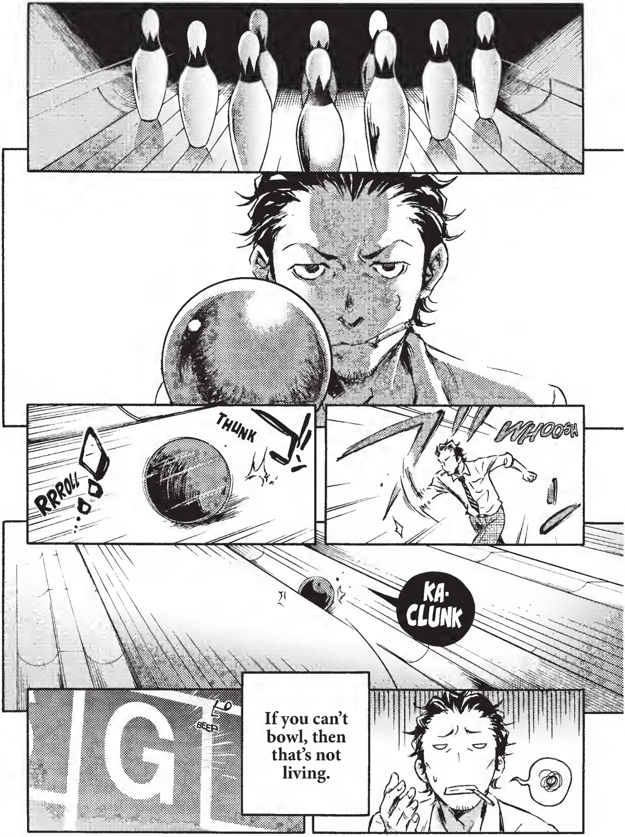
CAR: East 2 **SIGN (LEFT):** Accident prevention **SIGN (RIGHT):** Keep our town safe

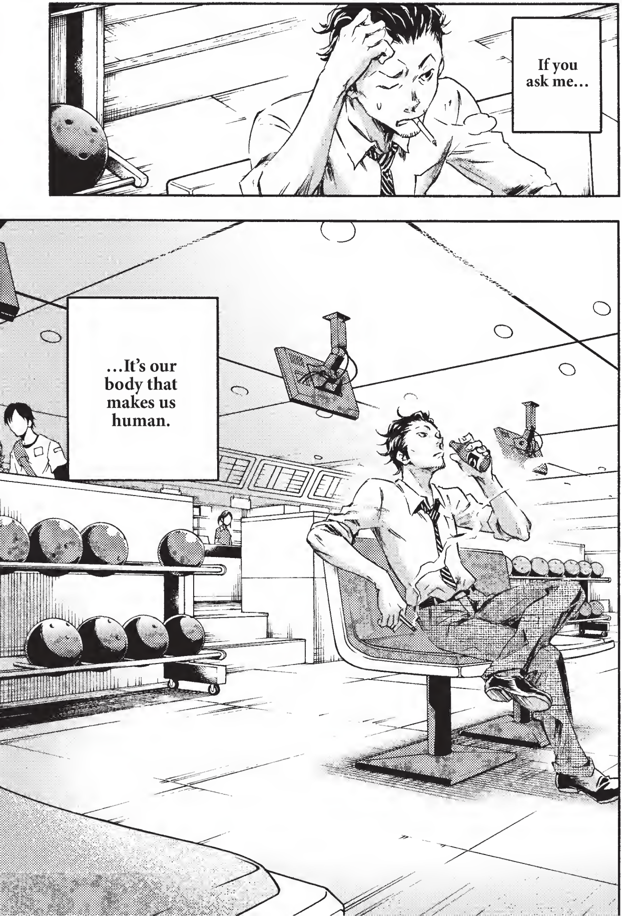

THEY SAY THEY FOUND A BALLPOINT PEN WITH THE VIC'S BLOOD ON IT IN THE TAXI.
RUSTLE
済

LABEL: Solved


I'M REALLY IMPRESSED. HOW DID ARIMA-SAN KNOW?
HE'LL PROBABLY JUST CHALK IT UP TO INTUITION AGAIN.
HEY, WHERE *IS* ARIMA-SAN?
PLAYING HOOKY?
NAH.


I BET HE WENT OFF TO SOLVE SOME NEW CASE.
15
13
12
11
10


WHOOSH
THUNK
RRROLL
KA-CLUNK
If you can't bowl, then that's not living.
BEEP
G


If you ask me…
…It's our body that makes us human.

From the author

Sensibilities change subtly over the course of a few years. But I guess that's not so strange. So much has happened in society these last few years, and Kataoka-san, our editor, and I all had big changes occur in our own private lives as well. People's views on life and death change gradually as we grow older and gain more experience. I think a lot has happened to change Amano-kun's direction ever so slightly, especially in these last few years. Please stay with us to the end.

This turned out to be my first graphic novel in about four years. I want to thank all of the readers who showed your concern and asked, "Huh? Is it over?" When the series started up again, I'd forgotten so much that when I looked over my material, I would think, "Oh, I wrote this?" There were even some ideas that made me wonder why I thought they were so interesting. I would ask myself things like, "Considering how quickly things change these days, couldn't he use a smartphone instead of a digital camera," and "Was it really a good idea to make Amano's toy a first-gen Game Boy?"

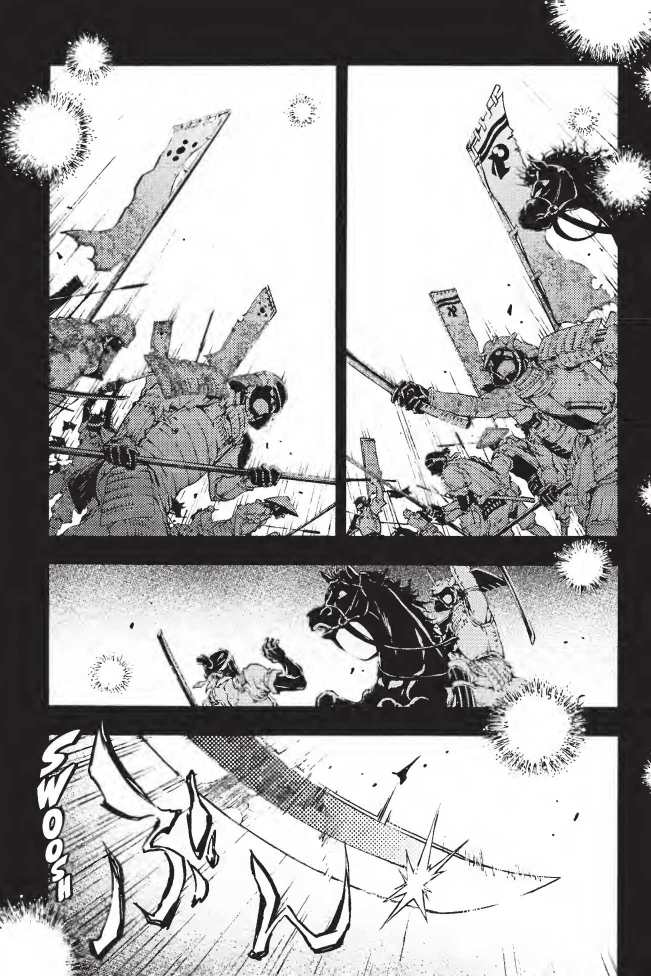
Tomohiro Maekawa

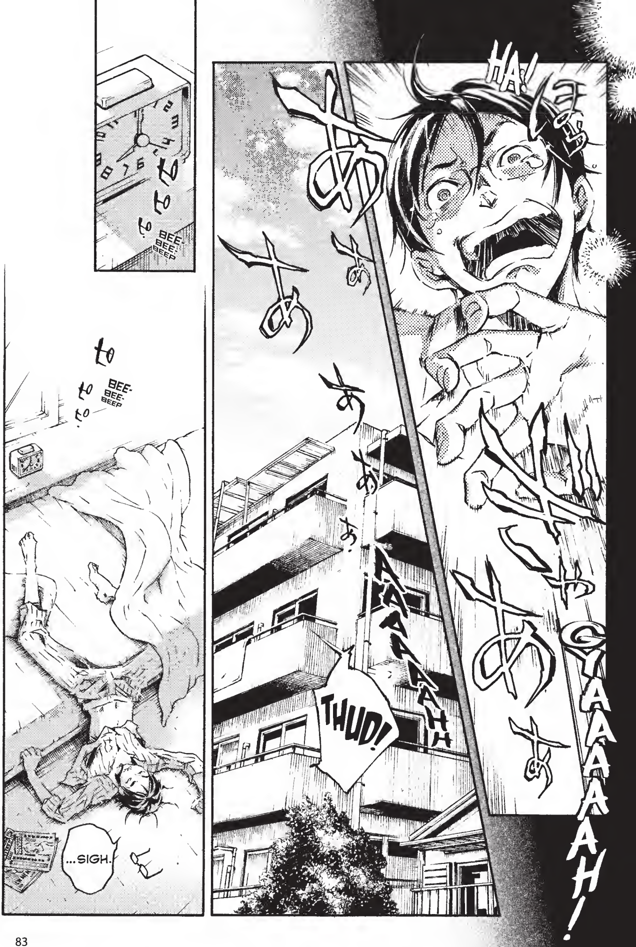
From Niigata prefecture.

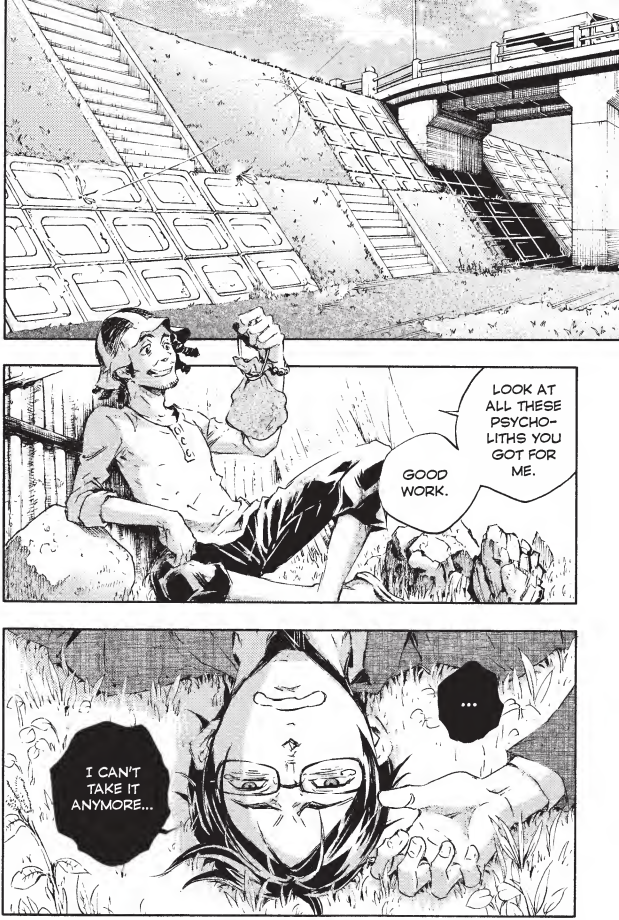
A writer and producer who writes slice of life stories that take place in supernatural settings. He has a wide range of work, from *Super Kabuki II* with Ennosuke Ichikawa IV, to works of modern theatre written in collaboration with Yukio Ninagawa.

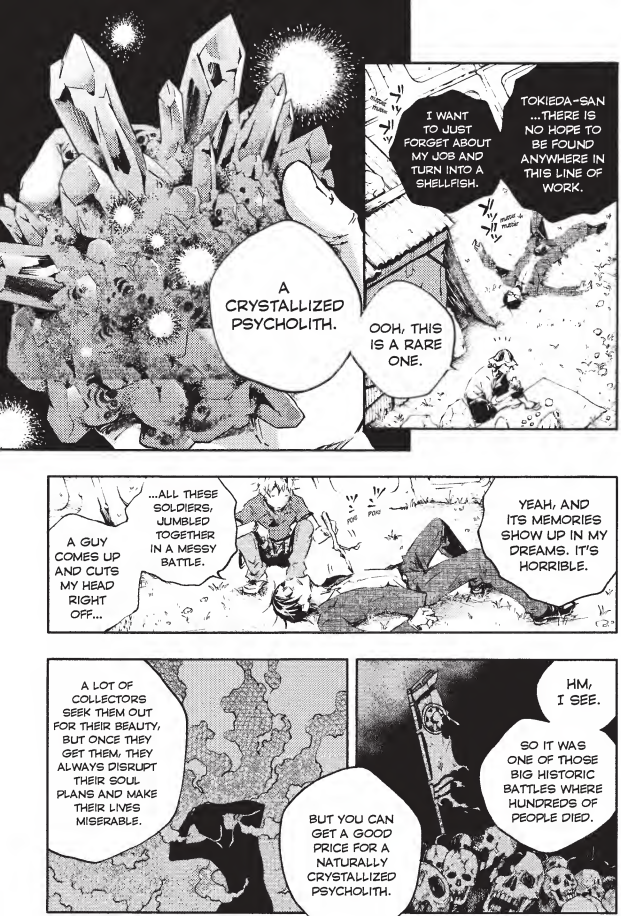
Chairman of the Ikiume theatre troupe, his *Taiyou [The Sun]* won the grand prize in the Yomiuri Drama Awards.

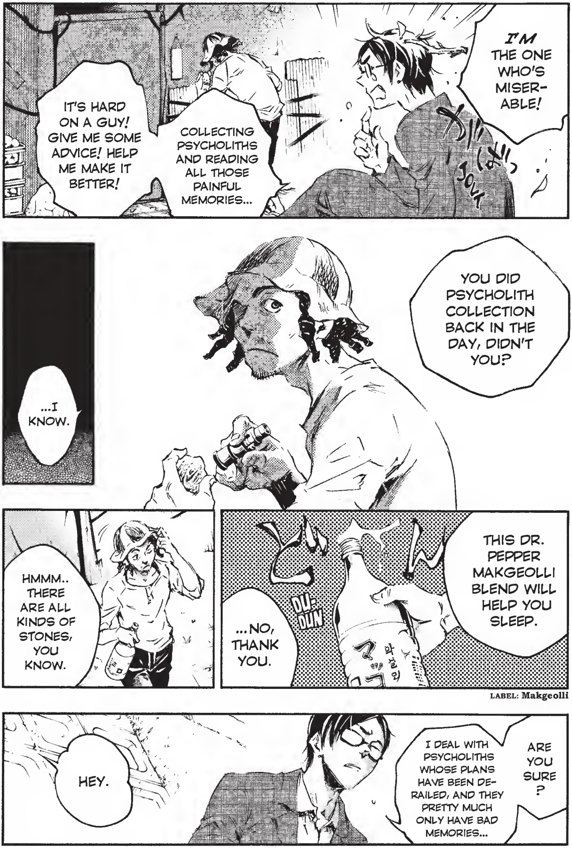
Chapter 8 ✚ Time Capsule

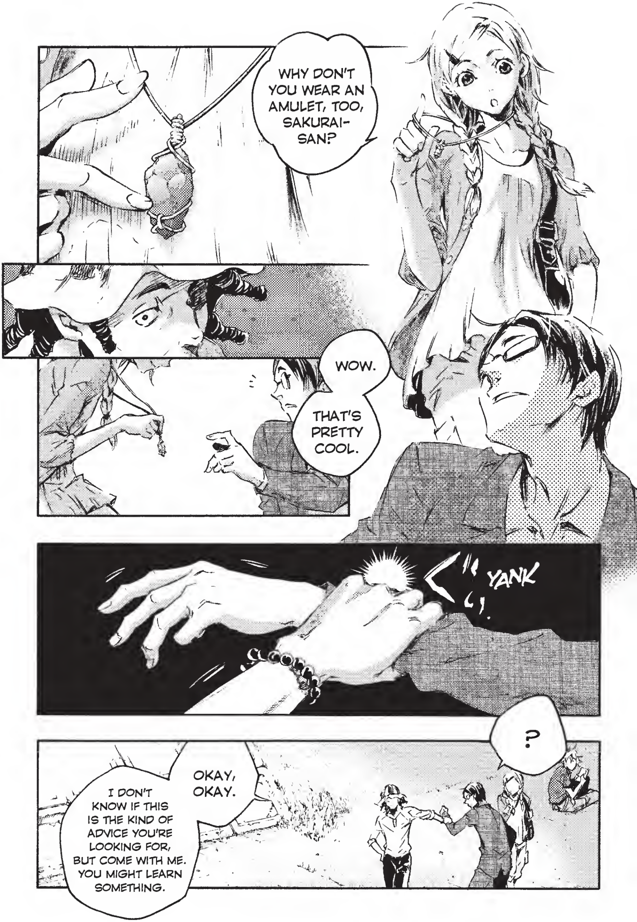

ブン
SWOOSH

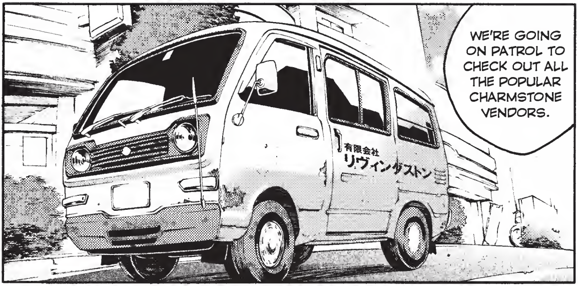

HA!
GYAAAAAAAH!
あああ
あああ
AAAAAAAH
THUD!
BEE-BEE-BEEP
BEE-BEE-BEEP
...SIGH.


LOOK AT ALL THESE PSYCHOLITHS YOU GOT FOR ME.
GOOD WORK.
...
I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE...

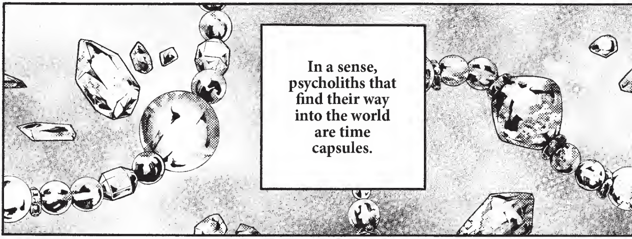

TOKIEDA-SAN ...THERE IS NO HOPE TO BE FOUND ANYWHERE IN THIS LINE OF WORK.
mutter mutter
I WANT TO JUST FORGET ABOUT MY JOB AND TURN INTO A SHELLFISH.
mutter mutter
OOH, THIS IS A RARE ONE.
A CRYSTALLIZED PSYCHOLITH.
YEAH, AND ITS MEMORIES SHOW UP IN MY DREAMS. IT'S HORRIBLE.
POKE
POKE
...ALL THESE SOLDIERS, JUMBLED TOGETHER IN A MESSY BATTLE.
A GUY COMES UP AND CUTS MY HEAD RIGHT OFF...
HM, I SEE.
SO IT WAS ONE OF THOSE BIG HISTORIC BATTLES WHERE HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE DIED.
A LOT OF COLLECTORS SEEK THEM OUT FOR THEIR BEAUTY, BUT ONCE THEY GET THEM, THEY ALWAYS DISRUPT THEIR SOUL PLANS AND MAKE THEIR LIVES MISERABLE.
BUT YOU CAN GET A GOOD PRICE FOR A NATURALLY CRYSTALLIZED PSYCHOLITH.

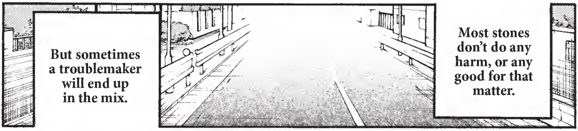

I'M THE ONE WHO'S MISERABLE!
JOLT
COLLECTING PSYCHOLITHS AND READING ALL THOSE PAINFUL MEMORIES...
IT'S HARD ON A GUY! GIVE ME SOME ADVICE! HELP ME MAKE IT BETTER!
YOU DID PSYCHOLITH COLLECTION BACK IN THE DAY, DIDN'T YOU?
...I KNOW.
THIS DR. PEPPER MAKGEOLLI BLEND WILL HELP YOU SLEEP.
DU-DUN
...NO, THANK YOU.
HMMM.. THERE ARE ALL KINDS OF STONES, YOU KNOW.
LABEL: Makgeolli
ARE YOU SURE?
I DEAL WITH PSYCHOLITHS WHOSE PLANS HAVE BEEN DERAILED, AND THEY PRETTY MUCH ONLY HAVE BAD MEMORIES...
HEY.

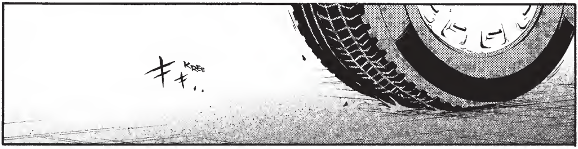

WHY DON'T YOU WEAR AN AMULET, TOO, SAKURAI-SAN?
WOW.
THAT'S PRETTY COOL.
YANK
?
OKAY, OKAY.
I DON'T KNOW IF THIS IS THE KIND OF ADVICE YOU'RE LOOKING FOR, BUT COME WITH ME. YOU MIGHT LEARN SOMETHING.

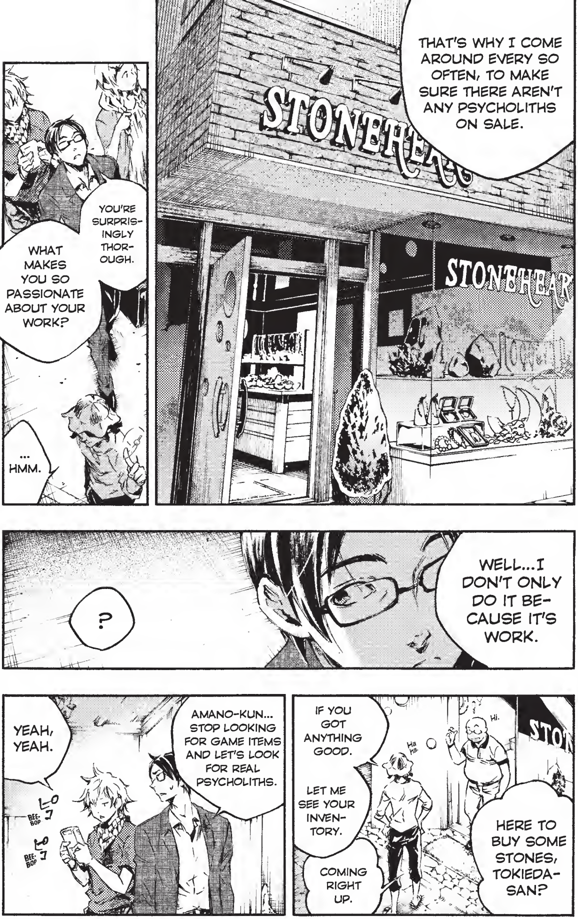

WE'RE GOING ON PATROL TO CHECK OUT ALL THE POPULAR CHARMSTONE VENDORS.
有限会社
リヴィングストン

VAN: Y.K. Livingstone

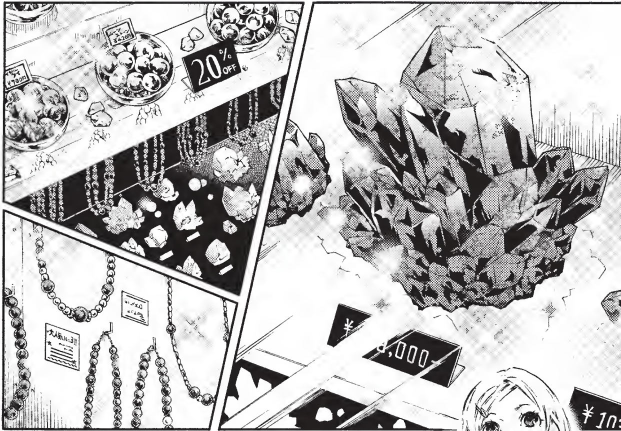

In a sense, psycholiths that find their way into the world are time capsules.


Most stones don't do any harm, or any good for that matter.
But sometimes a troublemaker will end up in the mix.

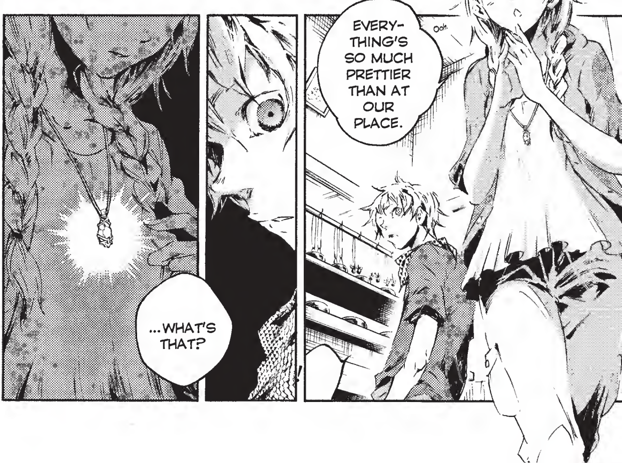


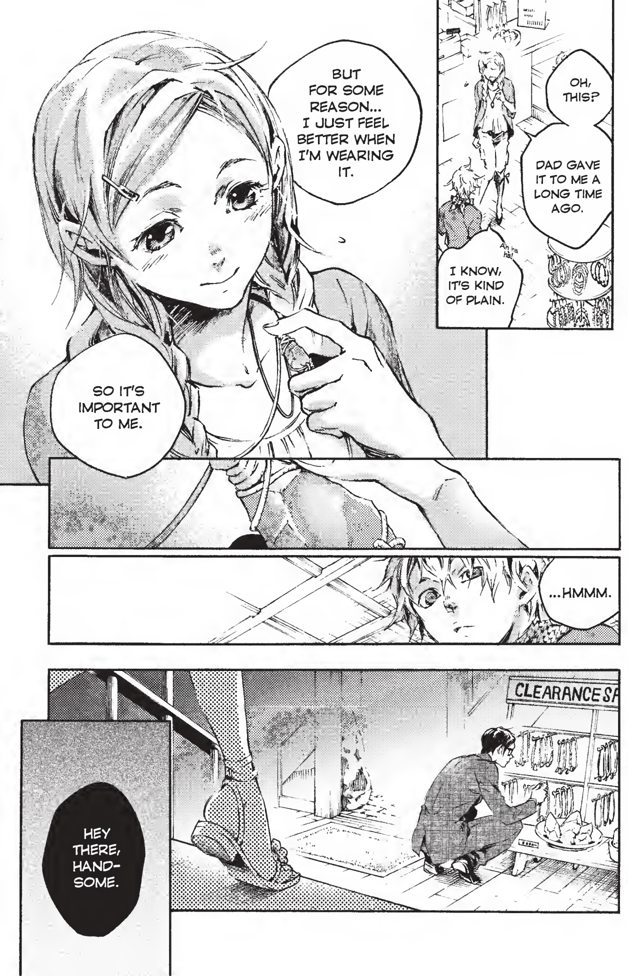

STONEHEAR
THAT'S WHY I COME AROUND EVERY SO OFTEN, TO MAKE SURE THERE AREN'T ANY PSYCHOLITHS ON SALE.
STONEHEAR
YOU'RE SURPRISINGLY THOROUGH.
WHAT MAKES YOU SO PASSIONATE ABOUT YOUR WORK?
... HMM.
WELL...I DON'T ONLY DO IT BECAUSE IT'S WORK.
?
STO
HERE TO BUY SOME STONES, TOKIEDA-SAN?
Hi.
Ha ha.
IF YOU GOT ANYTHING GOOD.
LET ME SEE YOUR INVENTORY.
COMING RIGHT UP.
AMANO-KUN... STOP LOOKING FOR GAME ITEMS AND LET'S LOOK FOR REAL PSYCHOLITHS.
YEAH, YEAH.
BEE-BOP
BEE-BOP

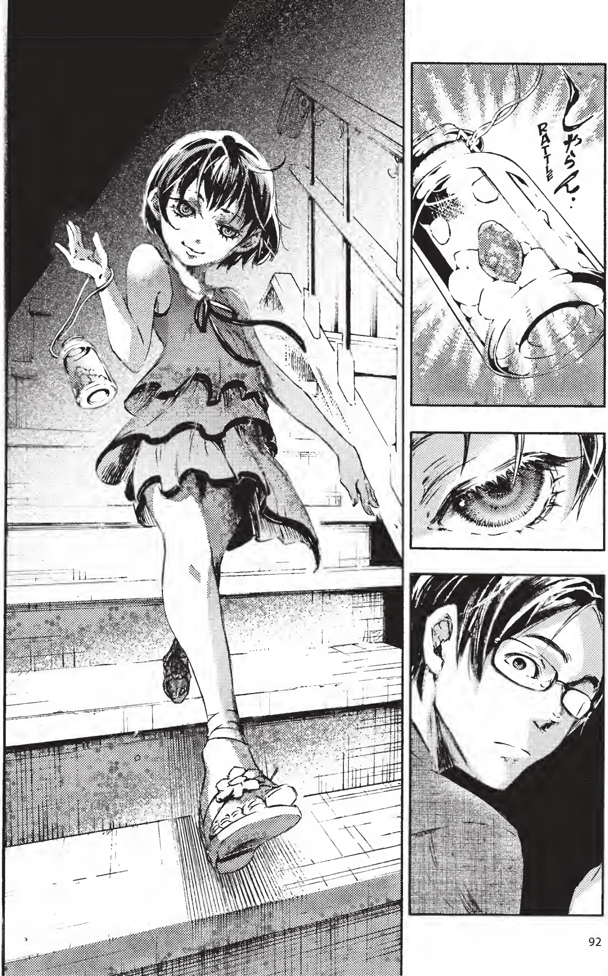
SIGN (RIGHT): Moonstone 420 yen
SIGN (LEFT): Tiger's Eye 790 yen

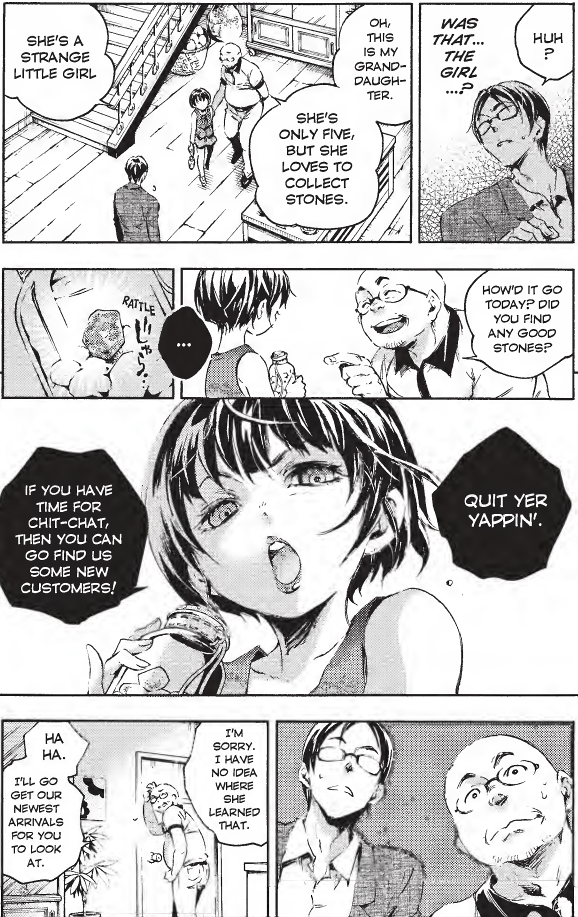

¥ 8,000
¥ 10
20% OFF

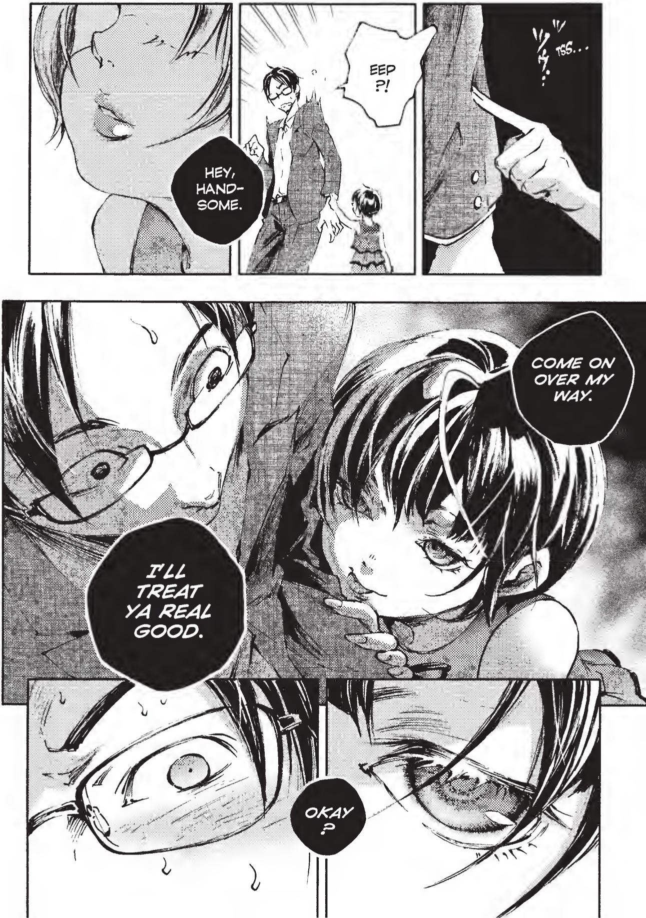
SIGN: Best seller #3!!

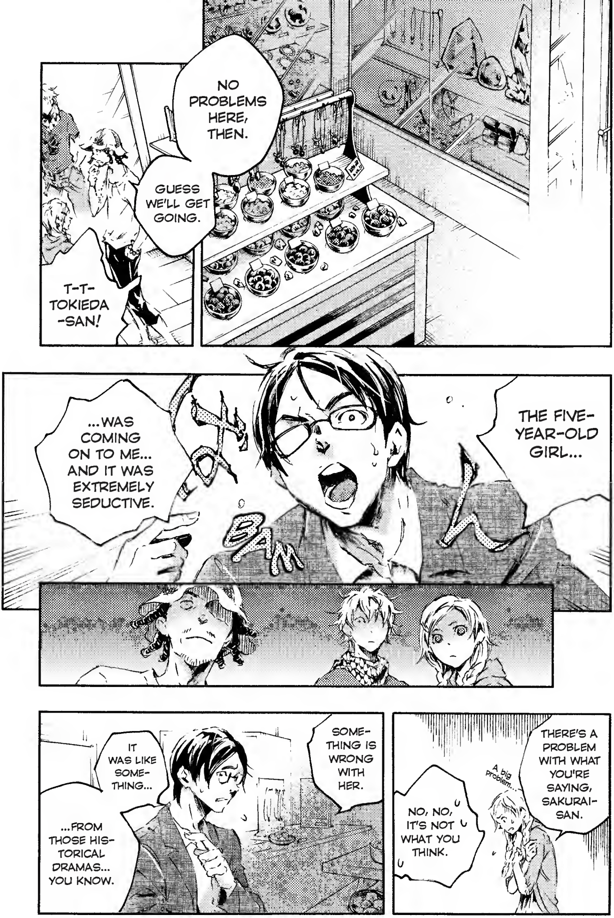

Ooh.
EVERYTHING'S SO MUCH PRETTIER THAN AT OUR PLACE.
...WHAT'S THAT?

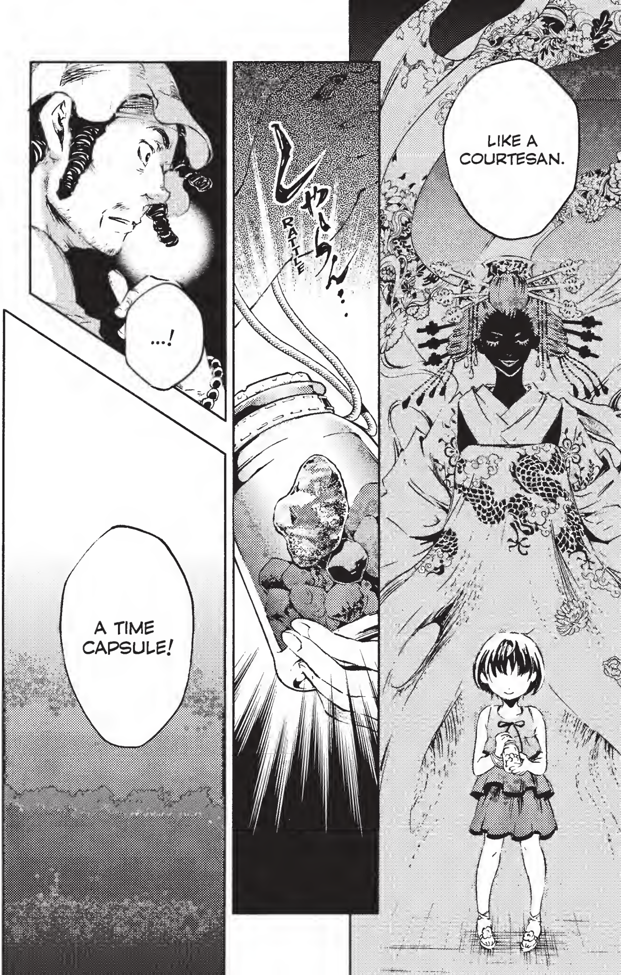

OH, THIS?
DAD GAVE IT TO ME A LONG TIME AGO.
Ah ha ha!
I KNOW, IT'S KIND OF PLAIN.
BUT FOR SOME REASON... I JUST FEEL BETTER WHEN I'M WEARING IT.
SO IT'S IMPORTANT TO ME.
...HMMM.
CLEARANCE SA
HEY THERE, HAND-SOME.

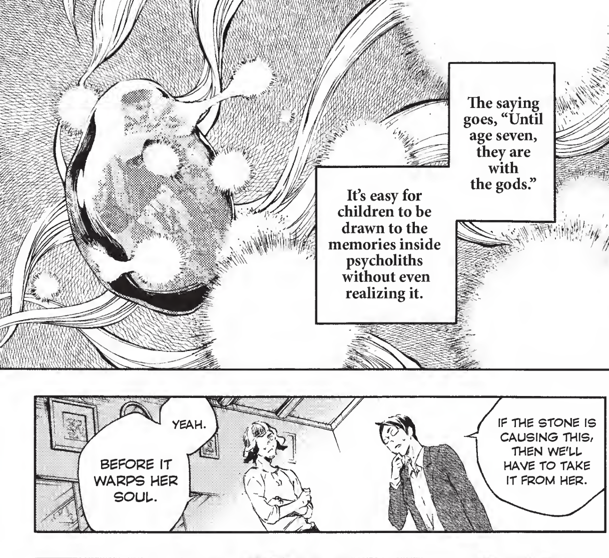

しゃらん・
RATTLE

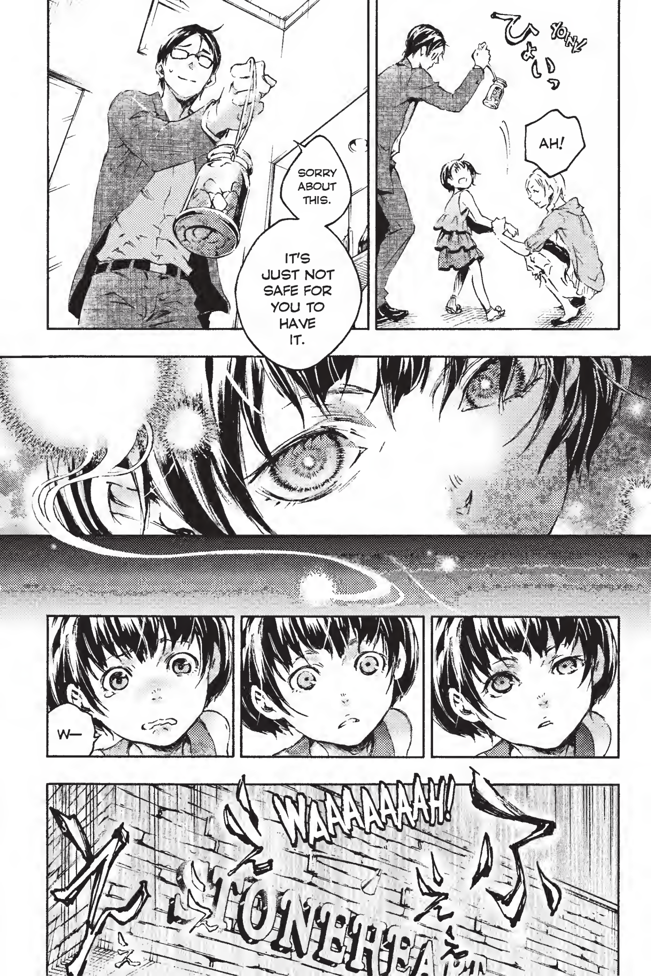

HUH?
WAS THAT... THE GIRL...?
OH, THIS IS MY GRANDDAUGHTER.
SHE'S ONLY FIVE, BUT SHE LOVES TO COLLECT STONES.
SHE'S A STRANGE LITTLE GIRL
HOW'D IT GO TODAY? DID YOU FIND ANY GOOD STONES?
...
RATTLE
じゃら…
QUIT YER YAPPIN'.
IF YOU HAVE TIME FOR CHIT-CHAT, THEN YOU CAN GO FIND US SOME NEW CUSTOMERS!
I'M SORRY. I HAVE NO IDEA WHERE SHE LEARNED THAT.
HA HA.
I'LL GO GET OUR NEWEST ARRIVALS FOR YOU TO LOOK AT.

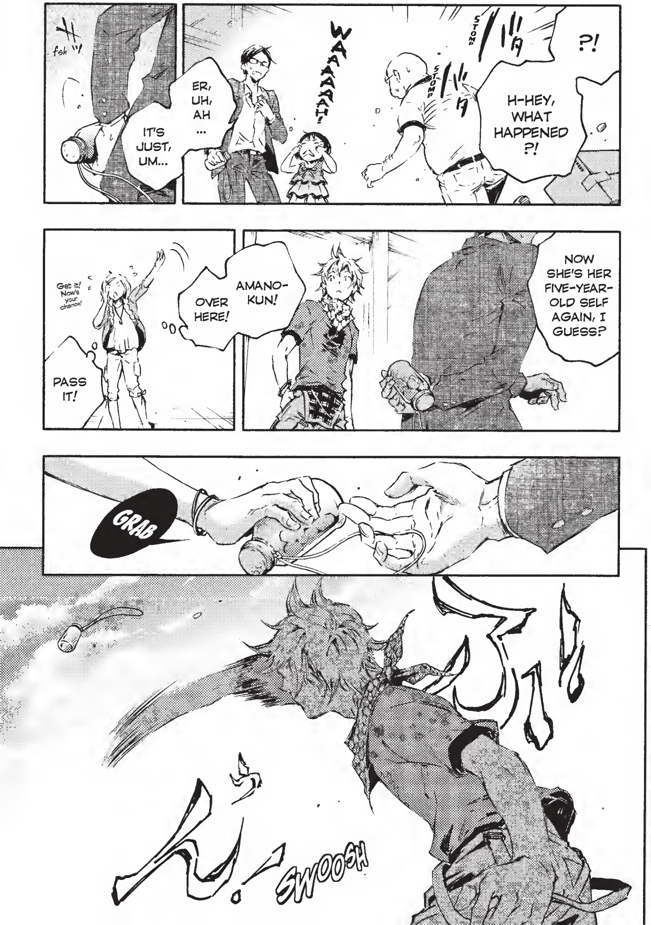

HEY, HANDSOME.
EEP ?!
TSS...
COME ON OVER MY WAY.
I'LL TREAT YA REAL GOOD.
OKAY ?

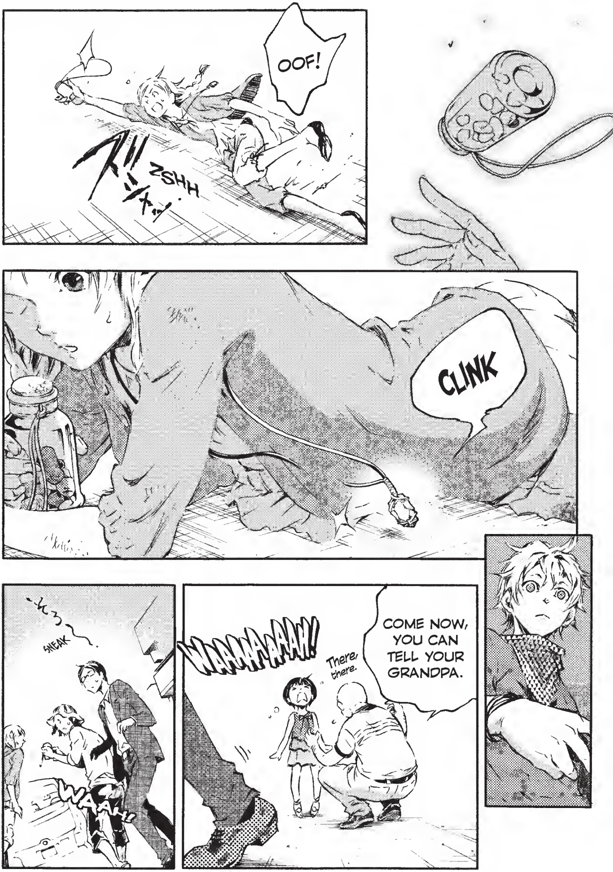

NO PROBLEMS HERE, THEN.
GUESS WE'LL GET GOING.
T-T-TOKIEDA-SAN!
THE FIVE-YEAR-OLD GIRL...
...WAS COMING ON TO ME... AND IT WAS EXTREMELY SEDUCTIVE.
BAM
SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH HER.
IT WAS LIKE SOMETHING...
...FROM THOSE HISTORICAL DRAMAS... YOU KNOW.
THERE'S A PROBLEM WITH WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, SAKURAI-SAN.
A big problem...
NO, NO, IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK.

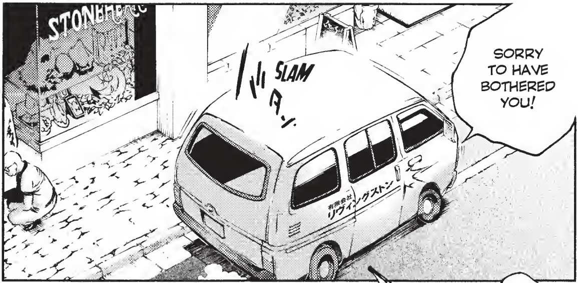

LIKE A COURTESAN.
しゃらん…
RATTLE
…!
A TIME CAPSULE!


The saying goes, "Until age seven, they are with the gods."
It's easy for children to be drawn to the memories inside psycholiths without even realizing it.
IF THE STONE IS CAUSING THIS, THEN WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE IT FROM HER.
YEAH.
BEFORE IT WARPS HER SOUL.
HI, LITTLE GIRL!
WOULD YOU MIND LETTING ME BORROW YOUR JAR OF STONES?
WHAT?
FAT CHANCE, *UGLY!*
CLAMP

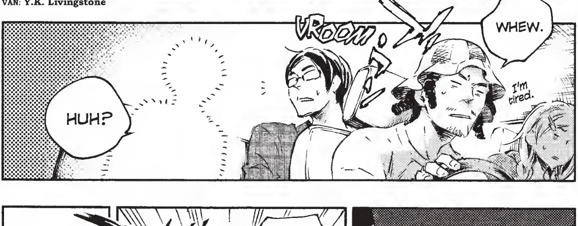

ひょいっ
YOINK!
AH!
SORRY ABOUT THIS.
IT'S JUST NOT SAFE FOR YOU TO HAVE IT.
W—
WAAAAAAAH!
STONEHEA

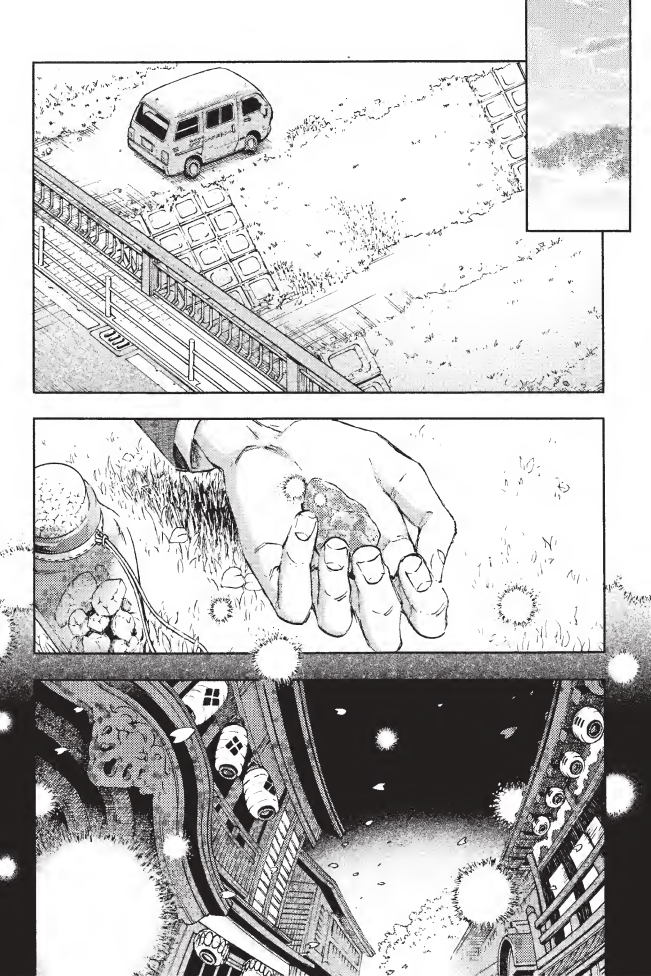

?!
STOMP
STOMP
H-HEY, WHAT HAPPENED?!
WAAAAAAAH!
ER, UH, AH ...
IT'S JUST, UM...
fsh
NOW SHE'S HER FIVE-YEAR-OLD SELF AGAIN, I GUESS?
AMANO-KUN!
OVER HERE!
PASS IT!
Get it! Now's your chance!
GRAB
SWOOSH

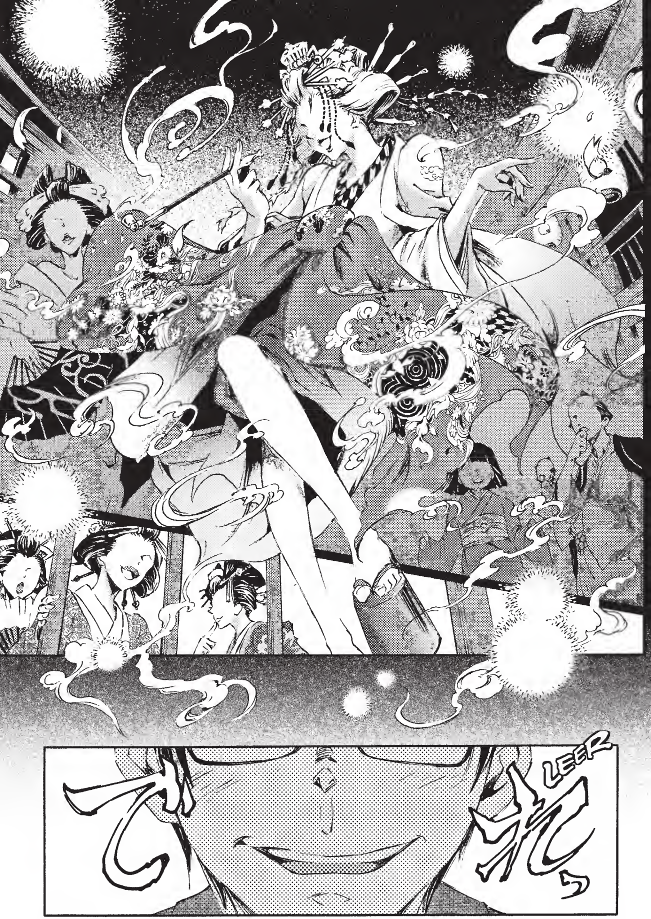

OOF!
ZSHH
CLINK
COME NOW, YOU CAN TELL YOUR GRANDPA.
There, there.
WAAAAAAAAH!
SNEAK
WAAH!

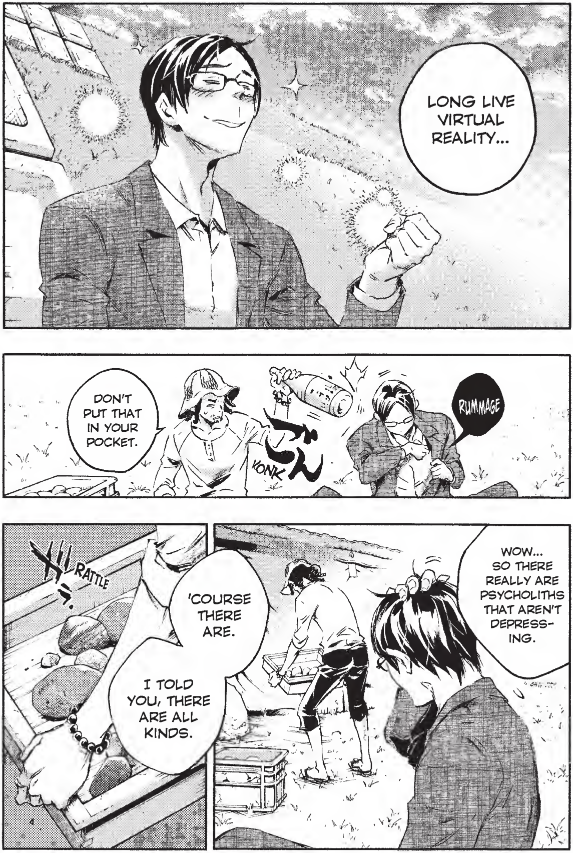

SORRY TO HAVE BOTHERED YOU!
SLAM
有限会社 リヴィングストン
STONEHE

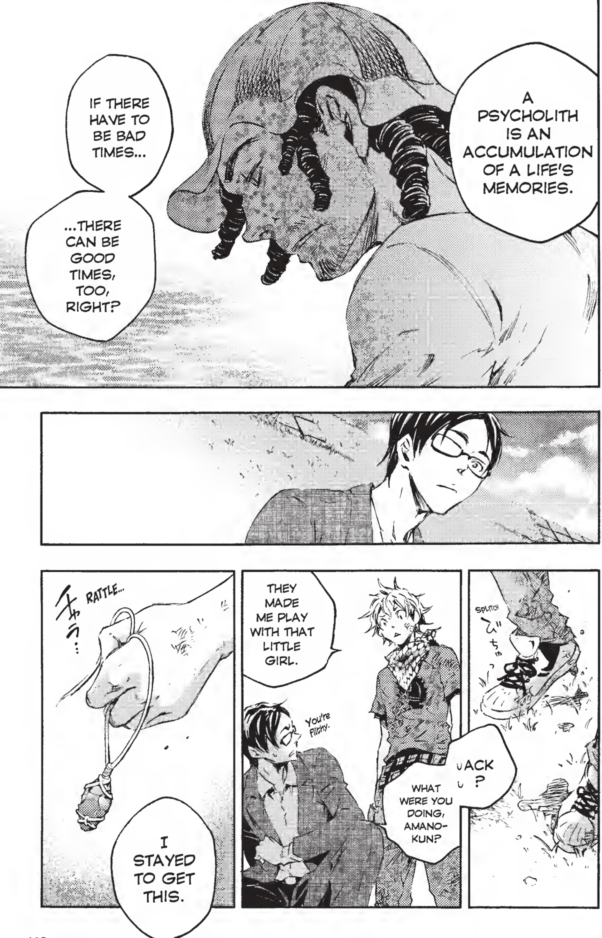
VAN: Y.K. Livingstone

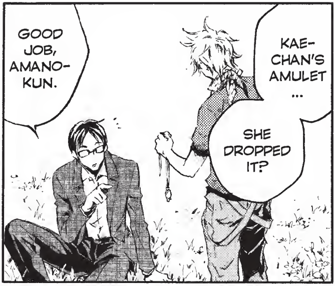

WHEW.
I'm tired.
VROOM
HUH?
AMANO-KUUUN!
WHY?!
VROOOM
AH! THEY GOT HIM!
FORGET HIM! WE'RE LEAVING!

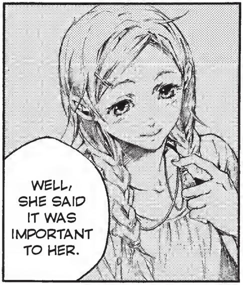


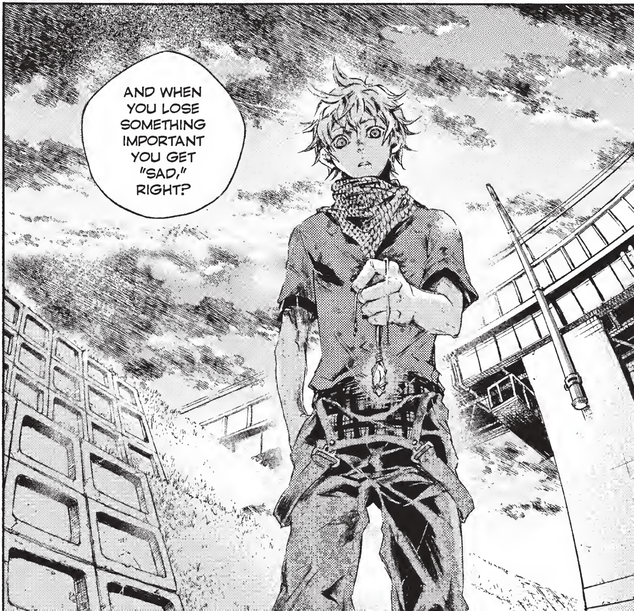

LEER

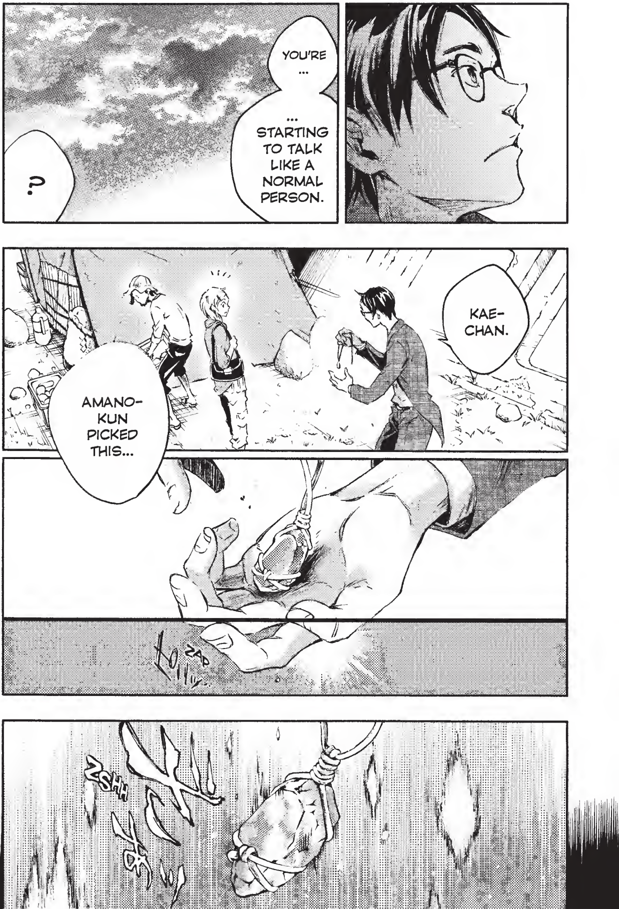

LONG LIVE VIRTUAL REALITY...
RUMMAGE
KONK
DON'T PUT THAT IN YOUR POCKET.
WOW... SO THERE REALLY ARE PSYCHOLITHS THAT AREN'T DEPRESS-ING.
'COURSE THERE ARE.
I TOLD YOU, THERE ARE ALL KINDS.
RATTLE

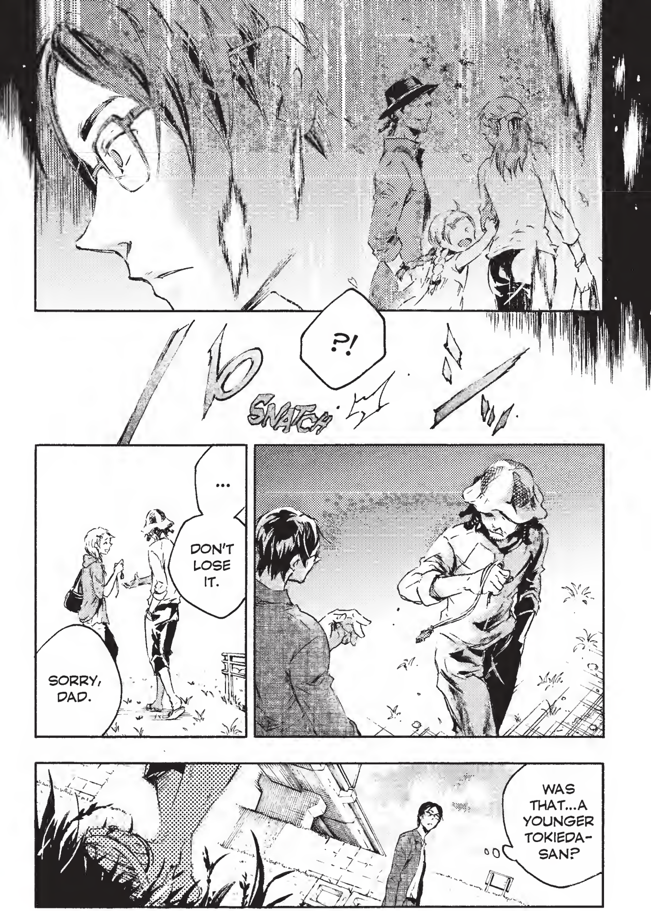

A PSYCHOLITH IS AN ACCUMULATION OF A LIFE'S MEMORIES.
IF THERE HAVE TO BE BAD TIMES...
...THERE CAN BE GOOD TIMES, TOO, RIGHT?
SPLITCH
ACK ?
WHAT WERE YOU DOING, AMANO-KUN?
THEY MADE ME PLAY WITH THAT LITTLE GIRL.
You're filthy.
チャラ…
RATTLE...
I STAYED TO GET THIS.

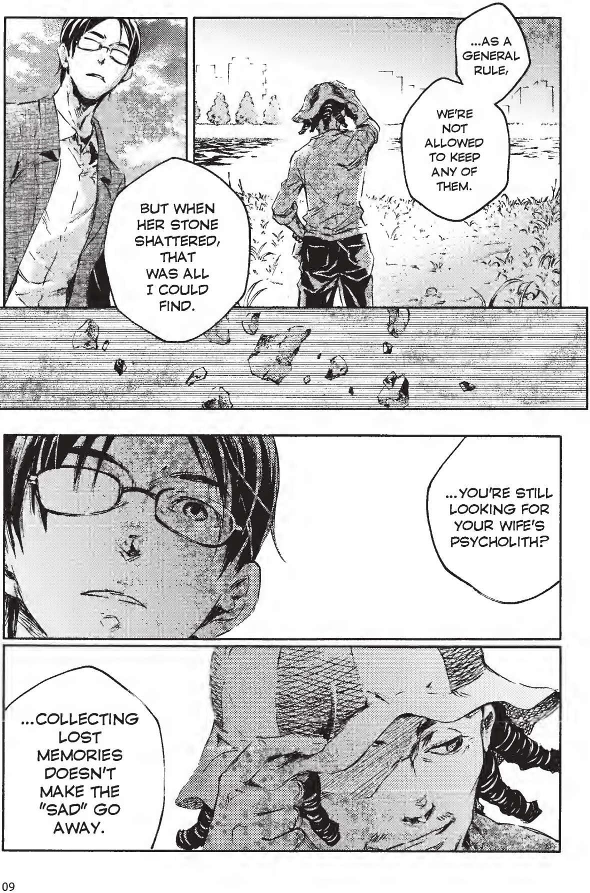

KAE-CHAN'S AMULET ...
SHE DROPPED IT?
GOOD JOB, AMANO-KUN.

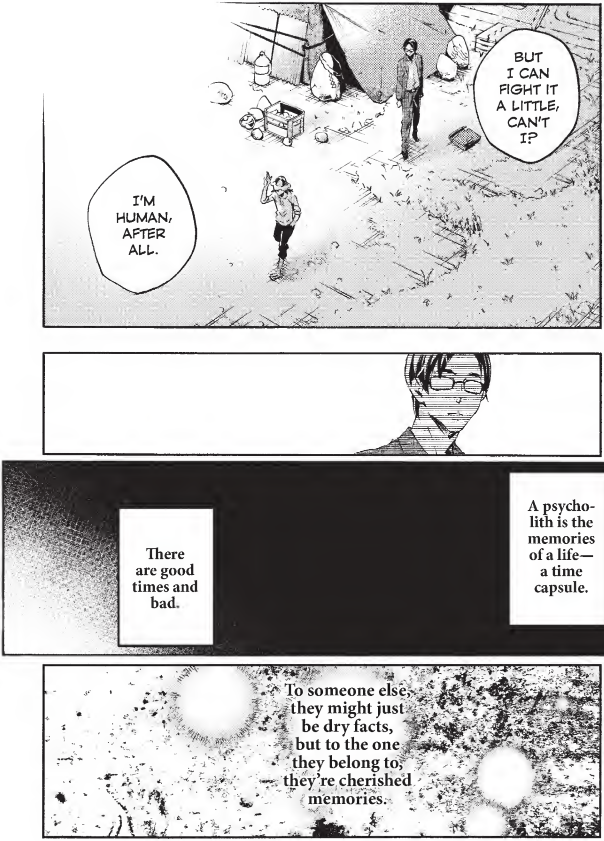

WELL, SHE SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT TO HER.

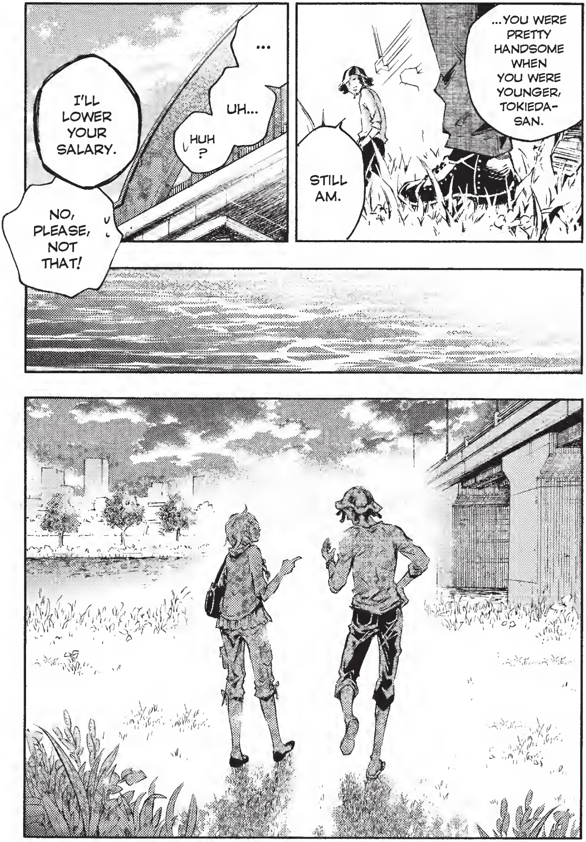

AND WHEN YOU LOSE SOMETHING IMPORTANT YOU GET "SAD," RIGHT?

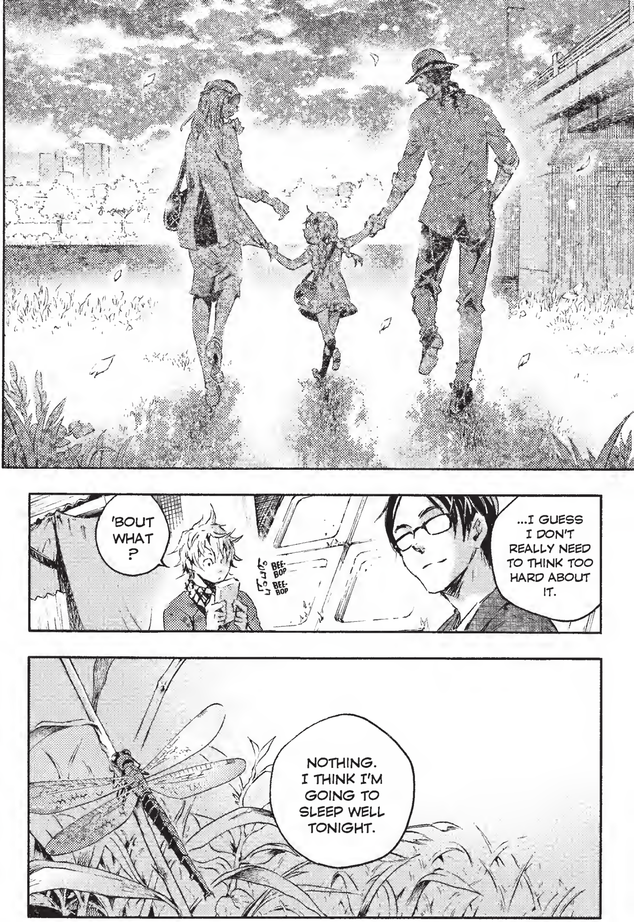

YOU'RE …
… STARTING TO TALK LIKE A NORMAL PERSON.
?
KAE-CHAN.
AMANO-KUN PICKED THIS…
ZAP
ZSHH


?!
SNATCH
...
DON'T LOSE IT.
SORRY, DAD.
WAS THAT...A YOUNGER TOKIEDA-SAN?


...AS A GENERAL RULE,
WE'RE NOT ALLOWED TO KEEP ANY OF THEM.
BUT WHEN HER STONE SHATTERED, THAT WAS ALL I COULD FIND.
...YOU'RE STILL LOOKING FOR YOUR WIFE'S PSYCHOLITH?
...COLLECTING LOST MEMORIES DOESN'T MAKE THE "SAD" GO AWAY.

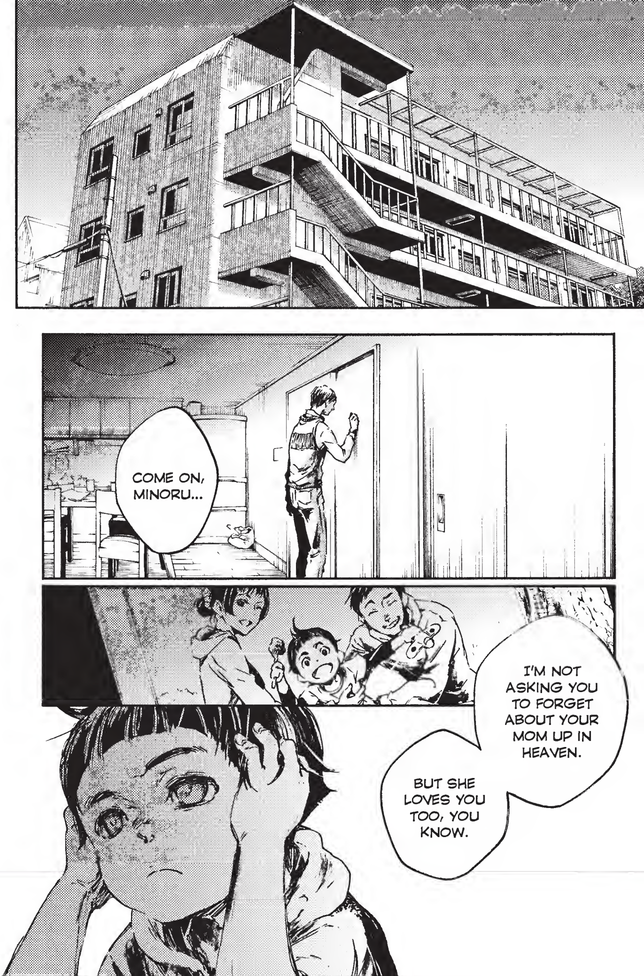

BUT I CAN FIGHT IT A LITTLE, CAN'T I?
I'M HUMAN, AFTER ALL.
A psycholith is the memories of a life—a time capsule.
There are good times and bad.
To someone else, they might just be dry facts, but to the one they belong to, they're cherished memories.

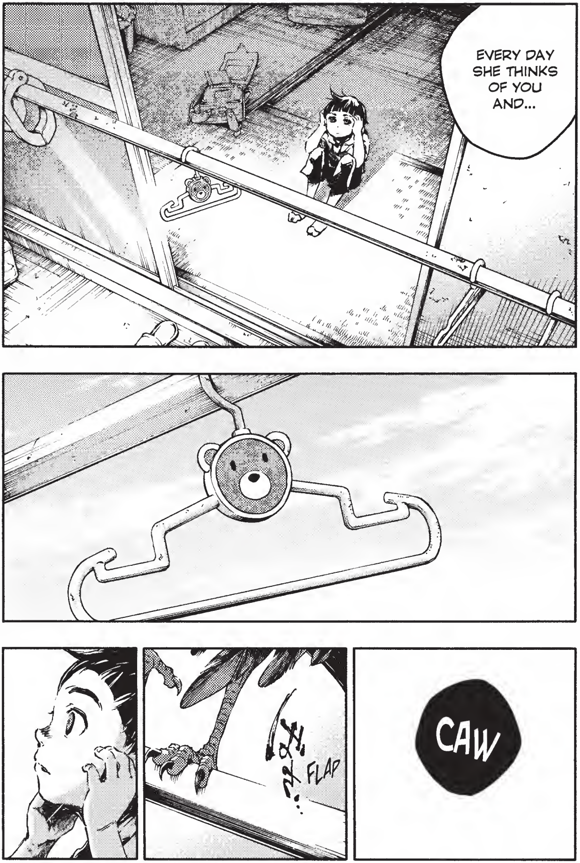

...YOU WERE PRETTY HANDSOME WHEN YOU WERE YOUNGER, TOKIEDA-SAN.
STILL AM.
...
UH...
HUH?
I'LL LOWER YOUR SALARY.
NO, PLEASE, NOT THAT!

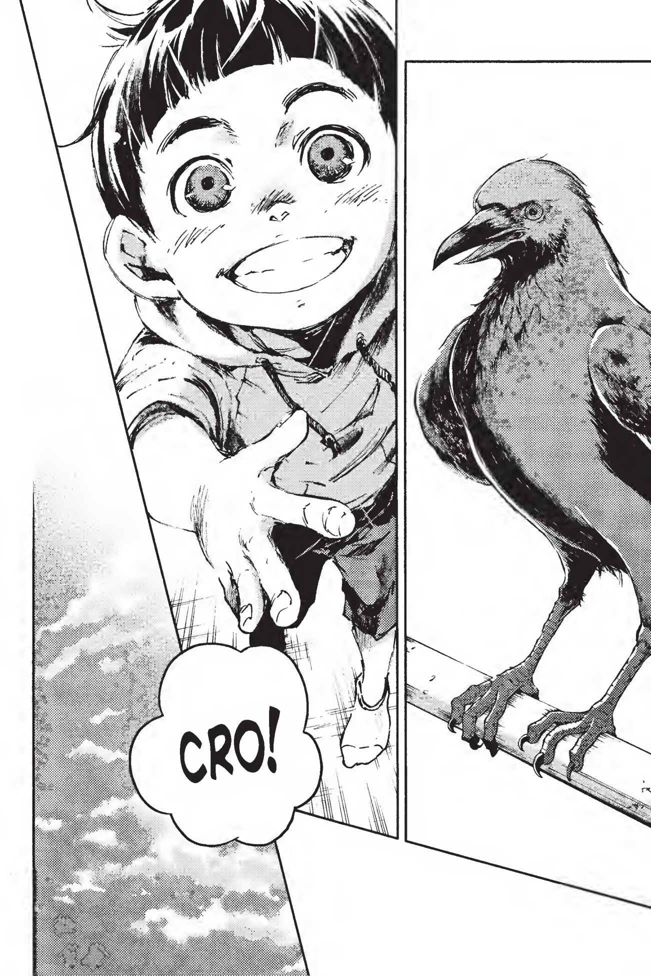

...I GUESS I DON'T REALLY NEED TO THINK TOO HARD ABOUT IT.
BEE-BOP BEE-BOP
'BOUT WHAT?
NOTHING. I THINK I'M GOING TO SLEEP WELL TONIGHT.

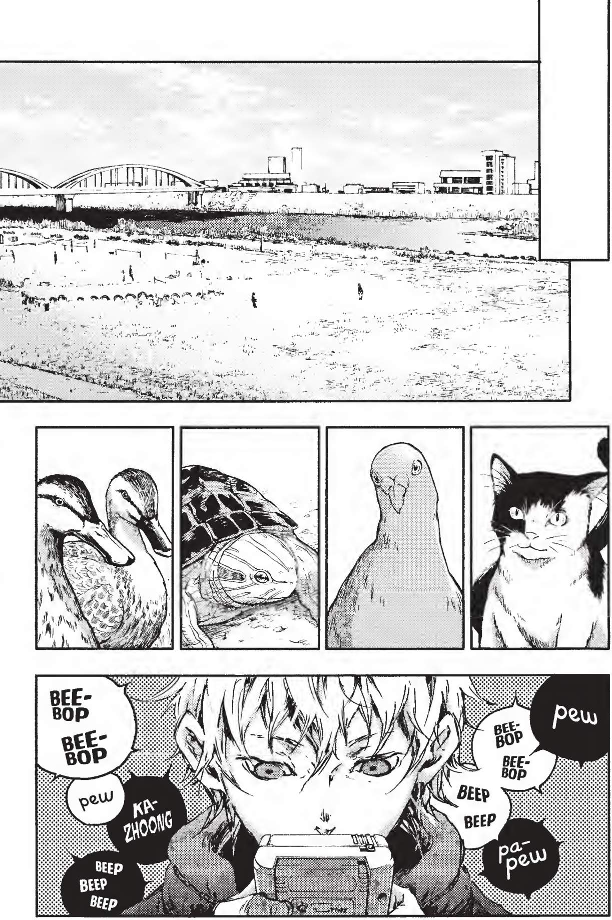
Chapter 9

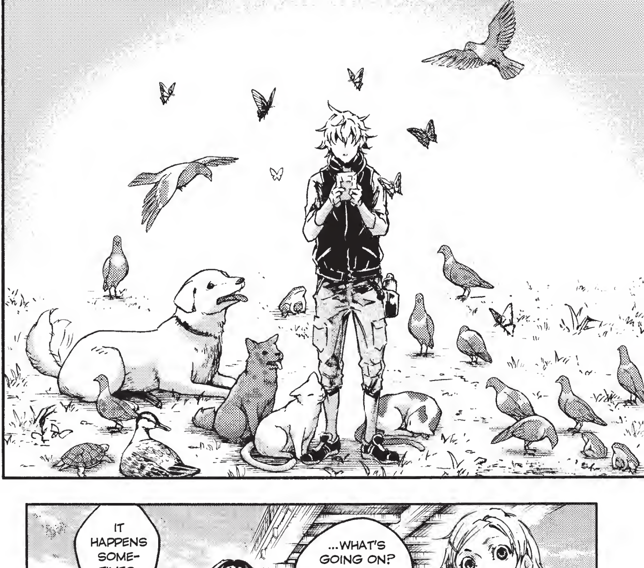
Creatures of Language

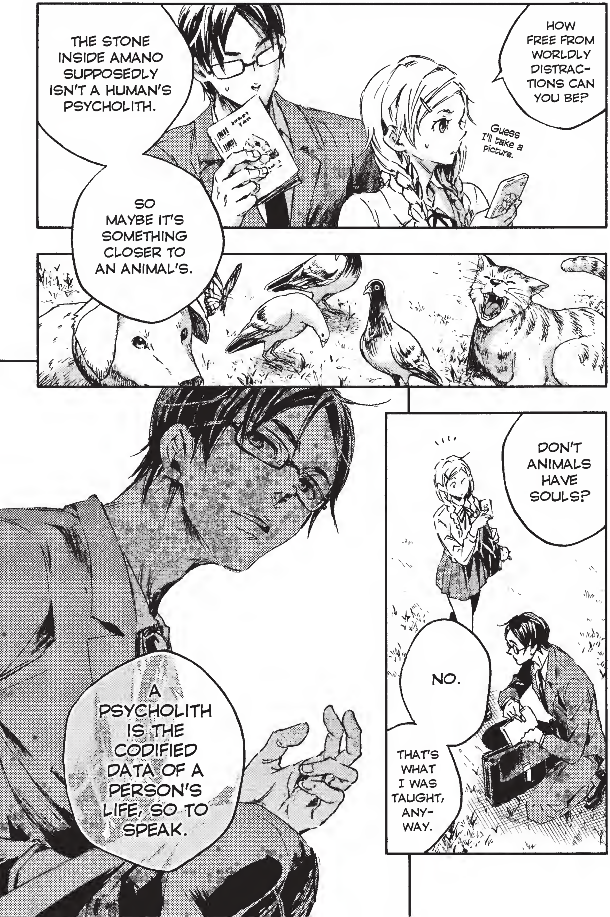

COME ON, MINORU...
I'M NOT ASKING YOU TO FORGET ABOUT YOUR MOM UP IN HEAVEN.
BUT SHE LOVES YOU TOO, YOU KNOW.

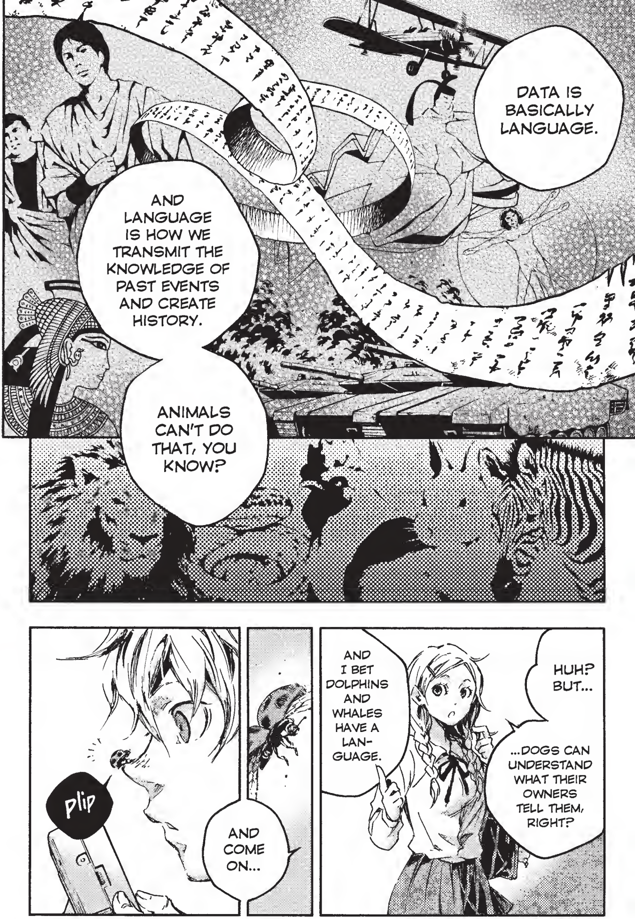

EVERY DAY SHE THINKS OF YOU AND...
FLAP
CAW

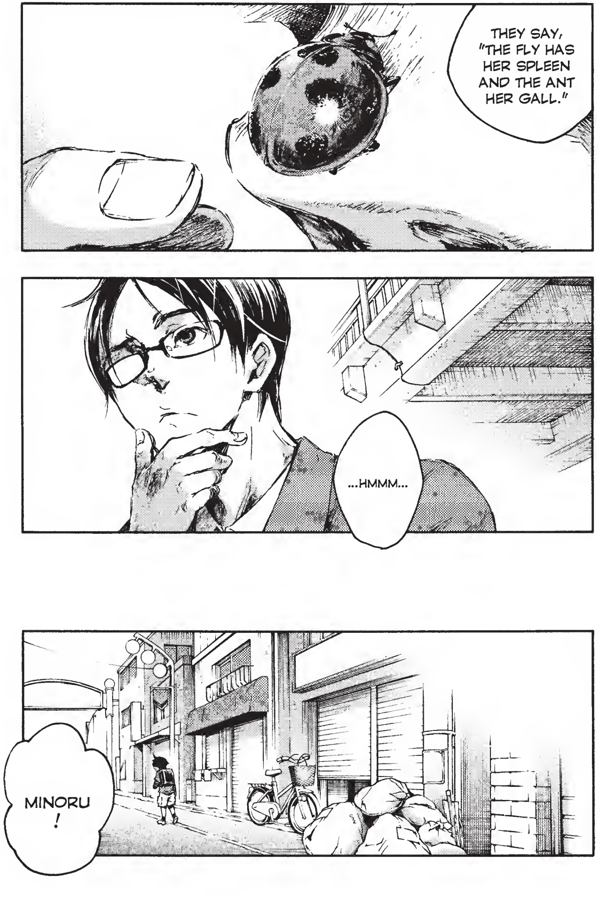

CRO!

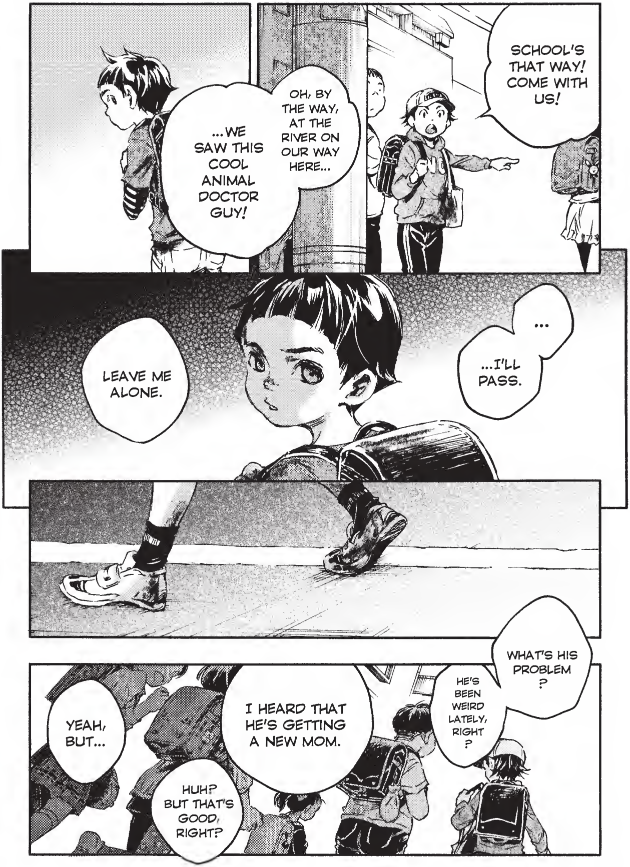

pew
BEE-BOP
BEE-BOP
BEEP
BEEP
pa-pew
BEE-BOP
BEE-BOP
pew
KA-ZHOONG
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP

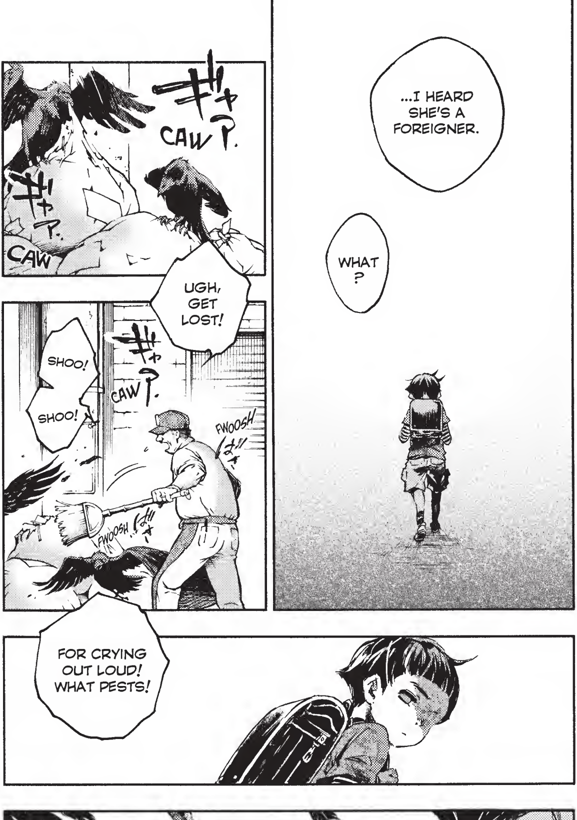

...WHAT'S GOING ON? IS HE THE BUDDHA OR SOMETHING?
IT HAPPENS SOMETIMES.
LIKE WHEN HE'S REALLY FOCUSED ON HIS GAME.
WHOA!
OOOH!
Please save us.
PRAISES BE, PRAISES BE.
BEE BOP
BEE BOP
BEE BOP

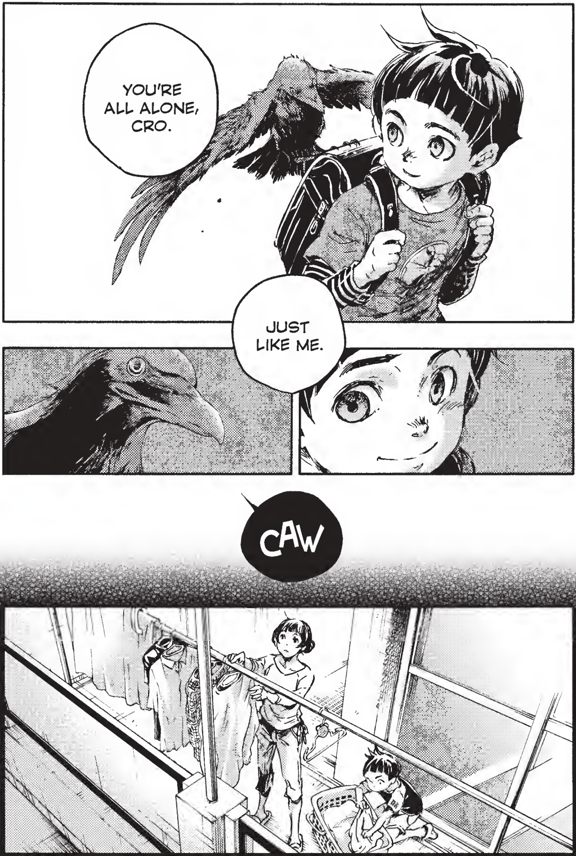

HOW FREE FROM WORLDLY DISTRACTIONS CAN YOU BE?
Guess I'll take a picture.
THE STONE INSIDE AMANO SUPPOSEDLY ISN'T A HUMAN'S PSYCHOLITH.
SO MAYBE IT'S SOMETHING CLOSER TO AN ANIMAL'S.
DON'T ANIMALS HAVE SOULS?
NO.
THAT'S WHAT I WAS TAUGHT, ANYWAY.
A PSYCHOLITH IS THE CODIFIED DATA OF A PERSON'S LIFE, SO TO SPEAK.

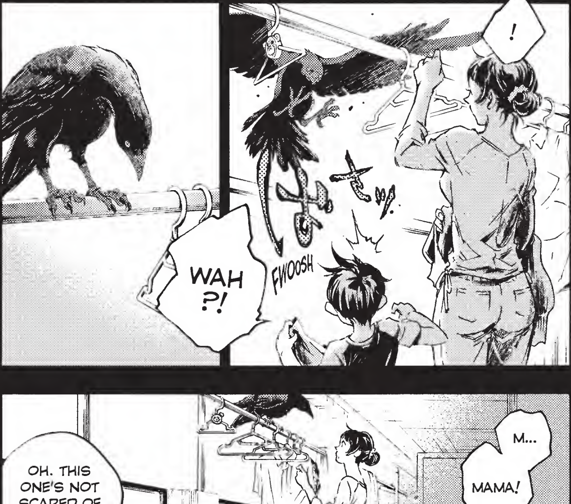

DATA IS BASICALLY LANGUAGE.
AND LANGUAGE IS HOW WE TRANSMIT THE KNOWLEDGE OF PAST EVENTS AND CREATE HISTORY.
ANIMALS CAN'T DO THAT, YOU KNOW?
HUH? BUT...
...DOGS CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT THEIR OWNERS TELL THEM, RIGHT?
AND I BET DOLPHINS AND WHALES HAVE A LANGUAGE.
AND COME ON...
plip

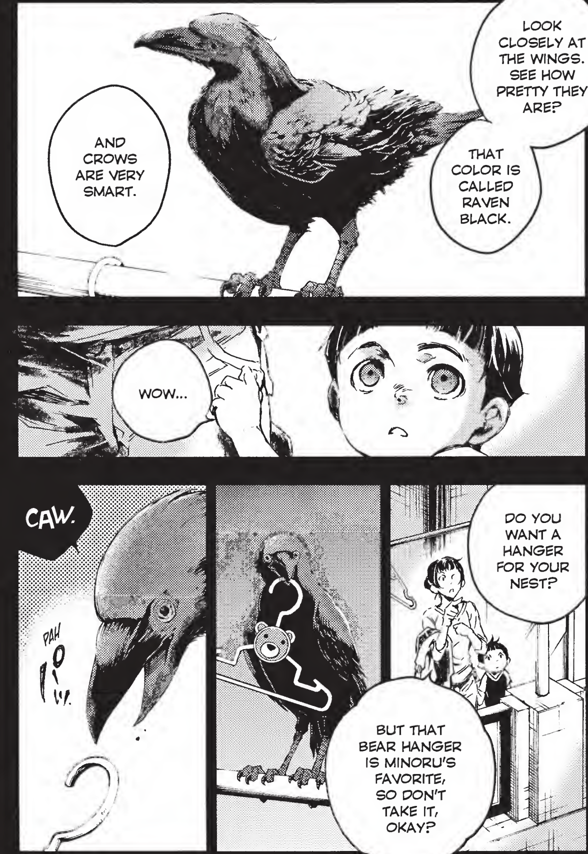

THEY SAY, "THE FLY HAS HER SPLEEN AND THE ANT HER GALL."
...HMMM...
MINORU!

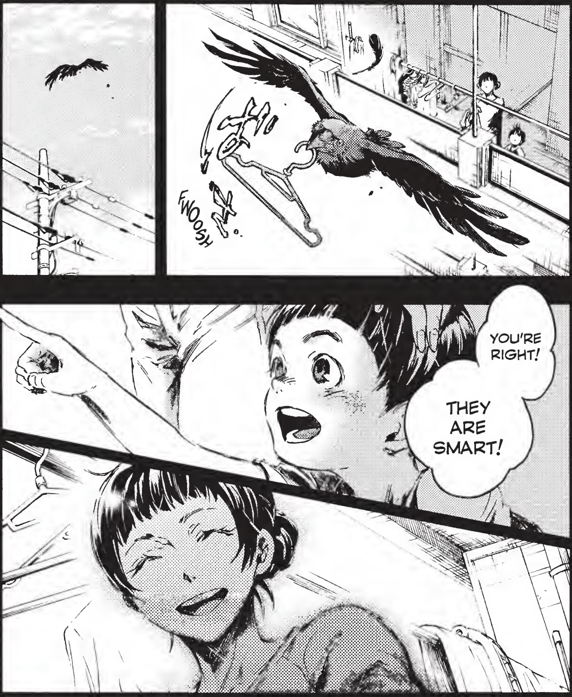

SCHOOL'S THAT WAY! COME WITH US!
OH, BY THE WAY, AT THE RIVER ON OUR WAY HERE...
...WE SAW THIS COOL ANIMAL DOCTOR GUY!
...
...I'LL PASS.
LEAVE ME ALONE.
WHAT'S HIS PROBLEM?
HE'S BEEN WEIRD LATELY, RIGHT?
I HEARD THAT HE'S GETTING A NEW MOM.
HUH? BUT THAT'S GOOD, RIGHT?
YEAH, BUT...

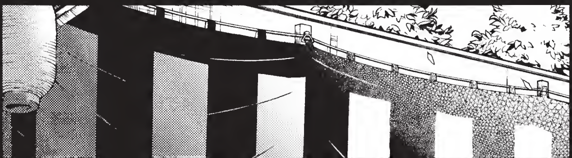

...I HEARD SHE'S A FOREIGNER.
WHAT?
ギャア
CAW
ギャア
CAW
UGH, GET LOST!
ギャア
CAW
SHOO!
SHOO!
FWOOSH
FWOOSH
FOR CRYING OUT LOUD! WHAT PESTS!
FLAP

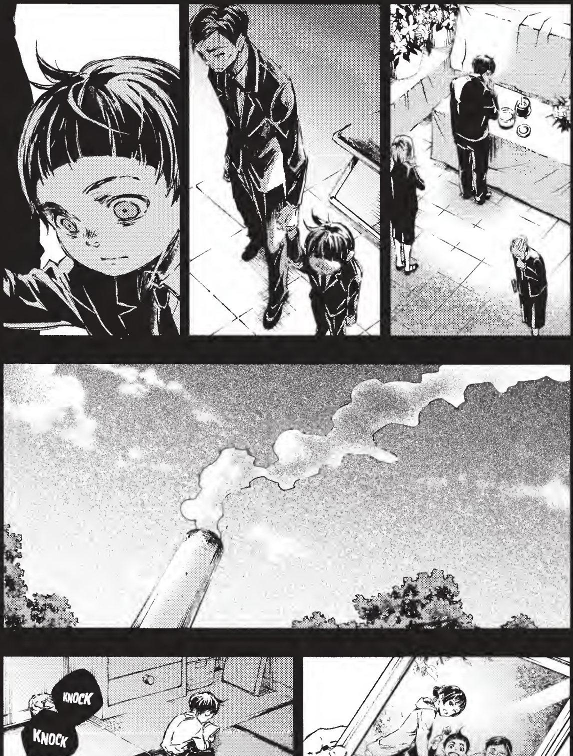

YOU'RE ALL ALONE, CRO.
JUST LIKE ME.
CAW

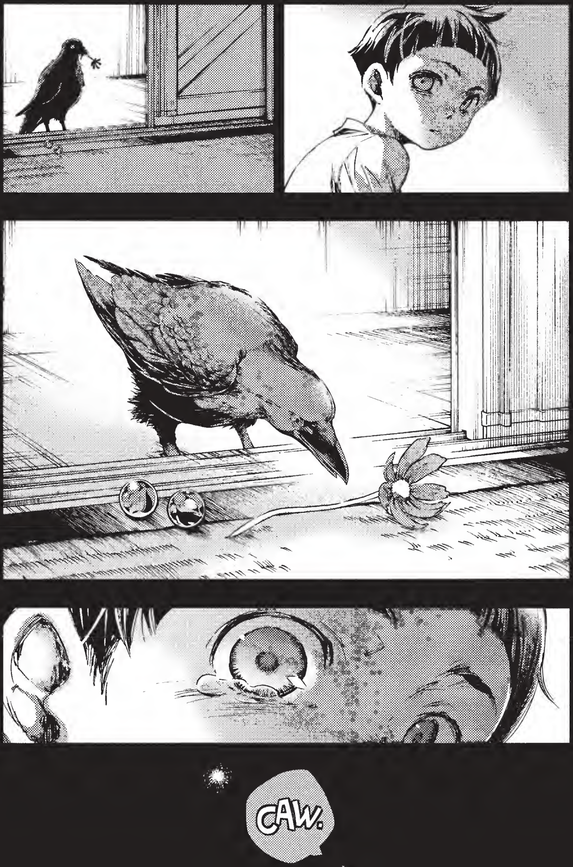

!
FWOOSH
WAH ?!
M...
MAMA!
OH. THIS ONE'S NOT SCARED OF PEOPLE.
BUT MAMA... AREN'T YOU SCARED?
IN STORYBOOKS, THEY'RE ALWAYS WITH THE WITCHES.
THAT'S TRUE. PEOPLE USUALLY HATE CROWS.
BUT I LIKE THEM.

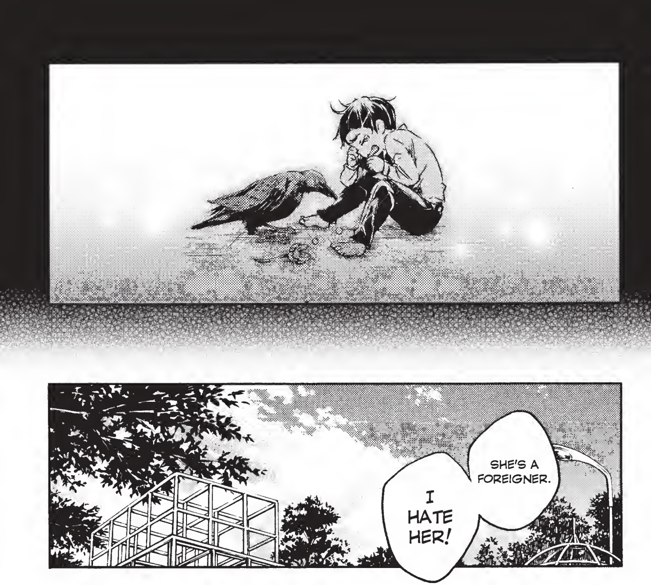

LOOK CLOSELY AT THE WINGS. SEE HOW PRETTY THEY ARE?
THAT COLOR IS CALLED RAVEN BLACK.
AND CROWS ARE VERY SMART.
WOW...
DO YOU WANT A HANGER FOR YOUR NEST?
BUT THAT BEAR HANGER IS MINORU'S FAVORITE, SO DON'T TAKE IT, OKAY?
CAW.
PAH

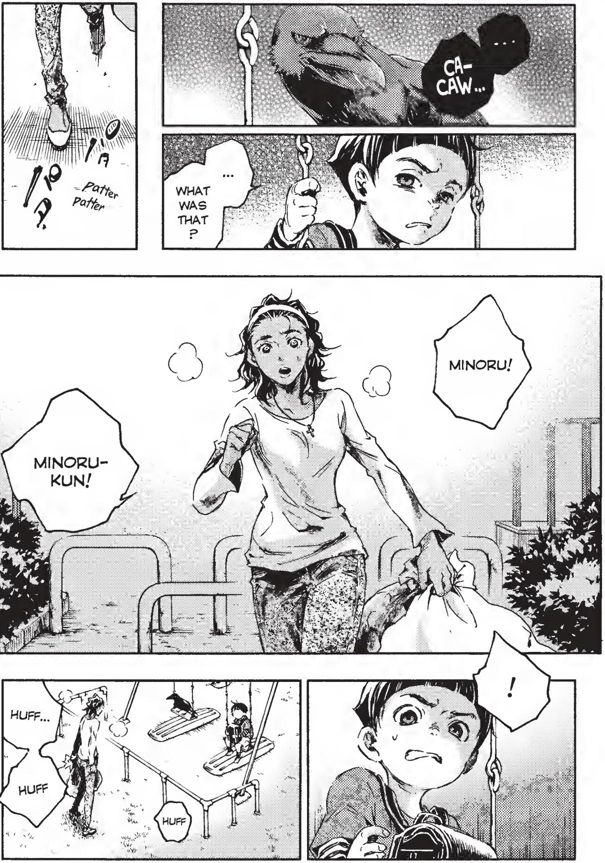

WHOOSH
YOU'RE RIGHT!
THEY ARE SMART!

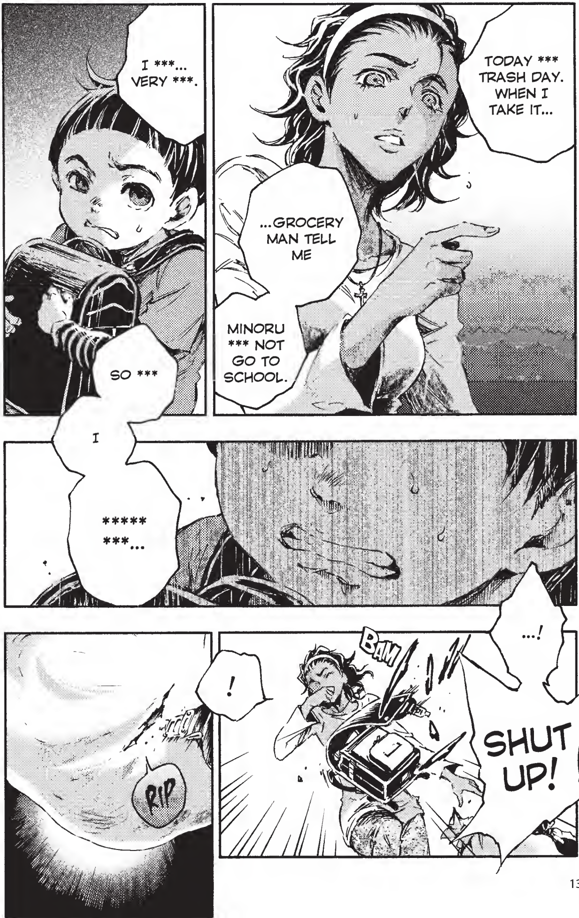


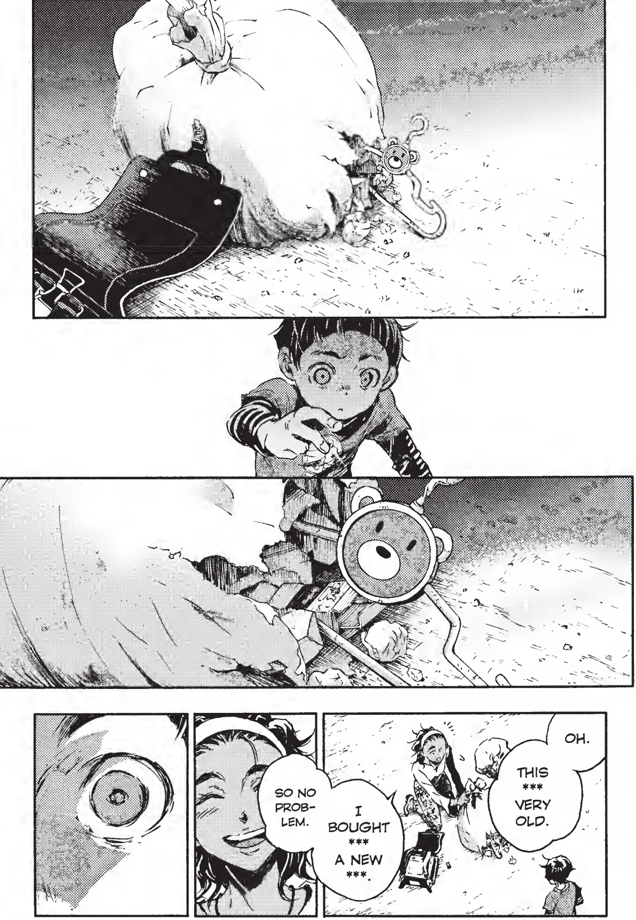

KNOCK
KNOCK

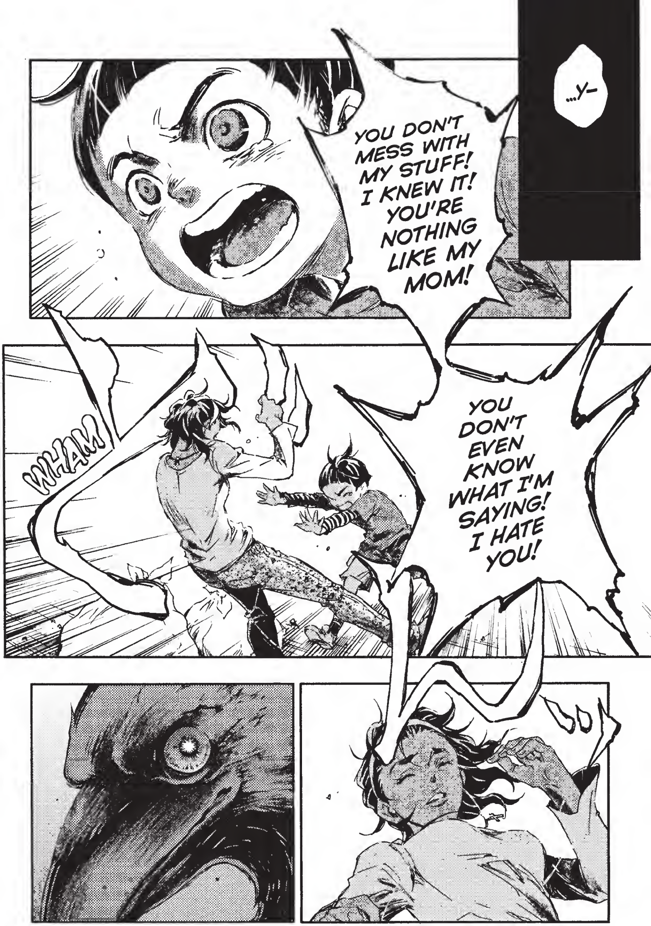

CAW.

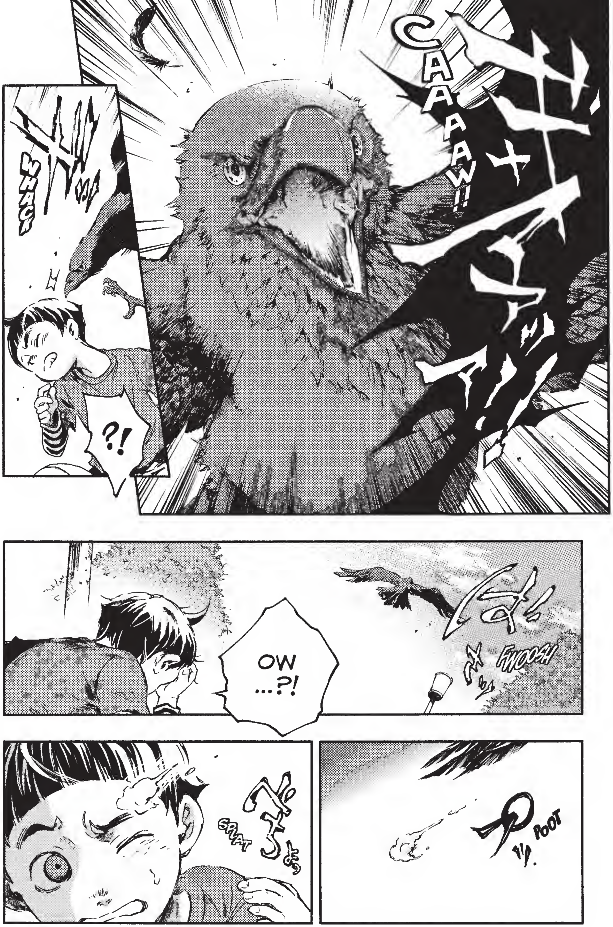

SHE'S A FOREIGNER.
I HATE HER!
DADDY SAYS SHE LIKES ME.
BUT I BET SHE JUST WANTS ME OUT OF THE WAY.
SHE TALKS IN WORDS I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
I JUST KNOW SHE'S SAYING BAD THINGS ABOUT ME AND MY MOM.

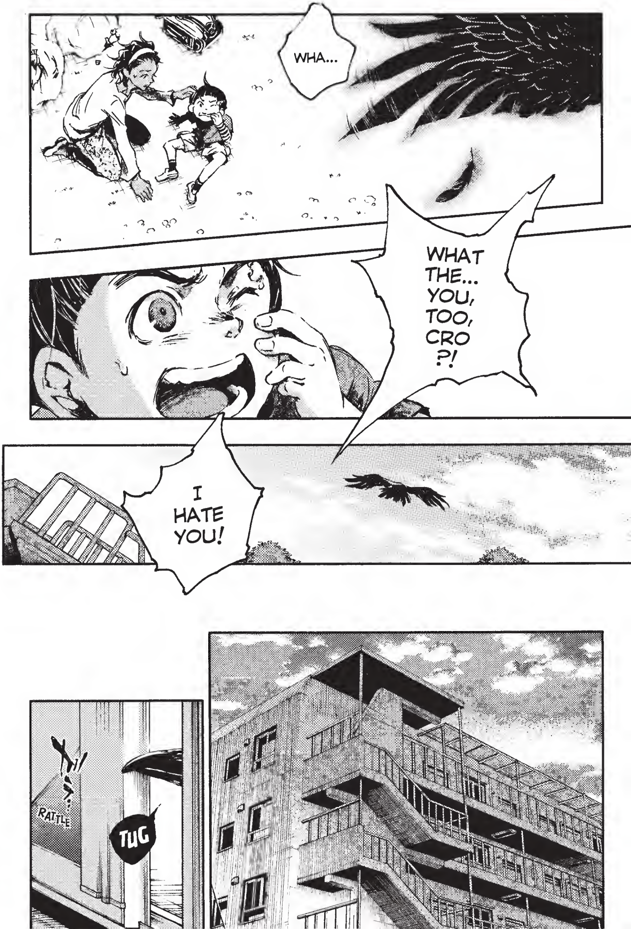

...
CA-CAW...
... WHAT WAS THAT?
Patter patter
MINORU!
MINORU-KUN!
!
HUFF...
HUFF
HUFF

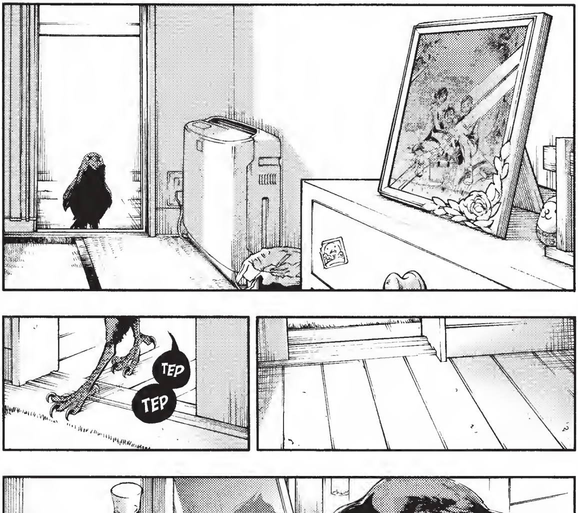

TODAY *** TRASH DAY. WHEN I TAKE IT...
...GROCERY MAN TELL ME
MINORU *** NOT GO TO SCHOOL.
I ***... VERY ***.
SO ***
I
***** ***...
...!
BAM
SHUT UP!
!
RIP

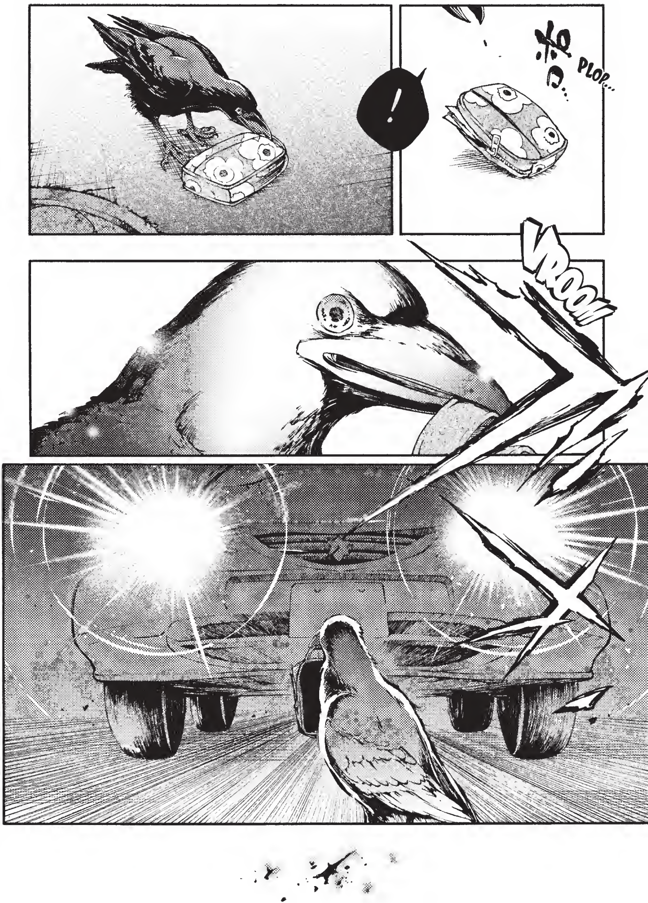

OH.
THIS *** VERY OLD.
I BOUGHT *** A NEW ***.
SO NO PROBLEM.

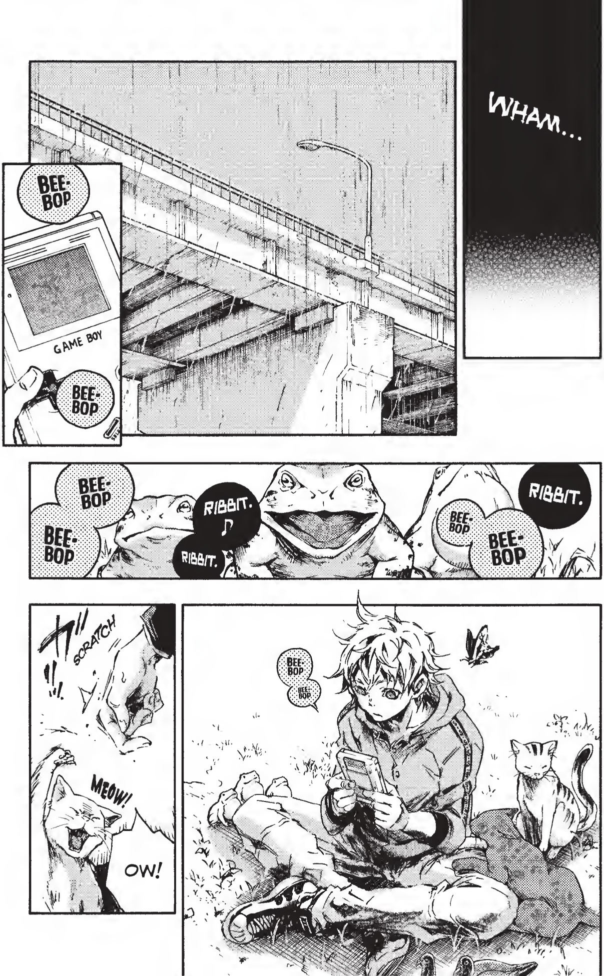

…y–
YOU DON'T MESS WITH MY STUFF! I KNEW IT! YOU'RE NOTHING LIKE MY MOM!
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING! I HATE YOU!
WHAM
DO

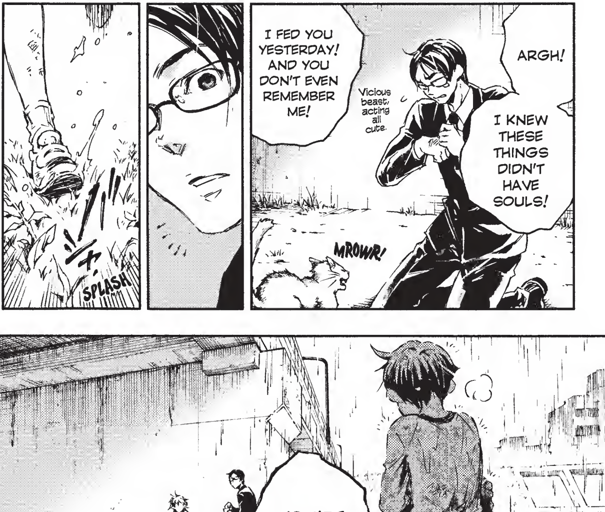

CAAAAAW!!
WHACK
?!
FWOOSH
OW ...?!
POOT
SPLAT

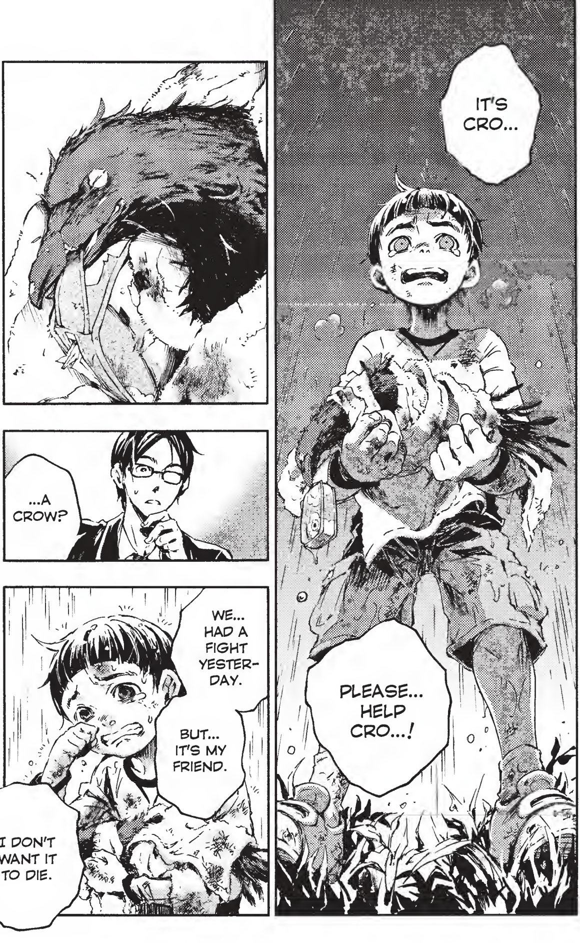

WHA...
WHAT THE... YOU, TOO, CRO ?!
I HATE YOU!
RATTLE
TUG

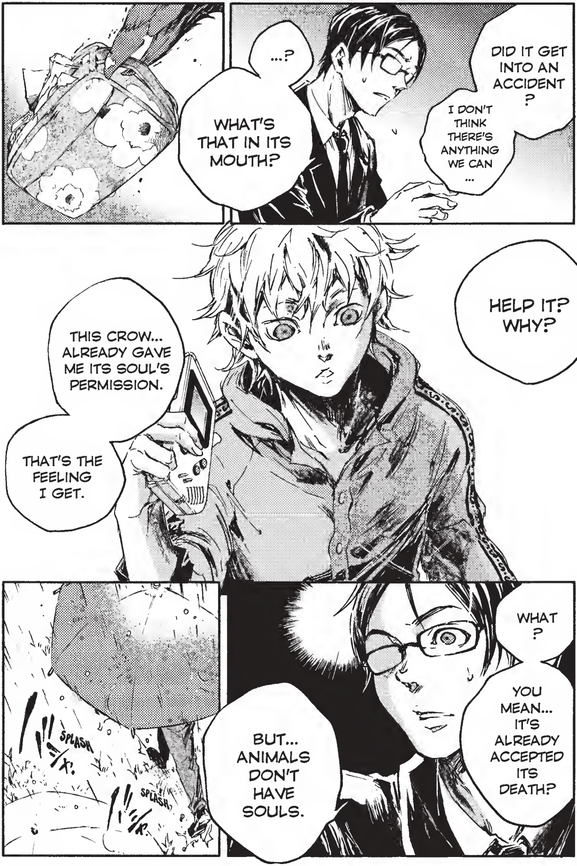

TEP
TEP
TUG グイ.
FLAP バサ..

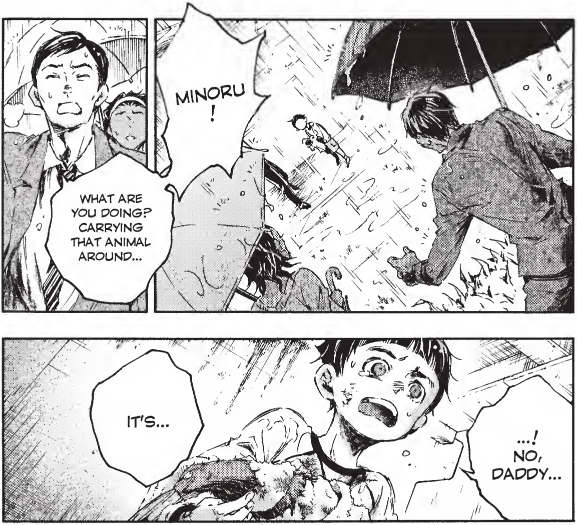

ぽろ…
PLOP...
!
VROOM

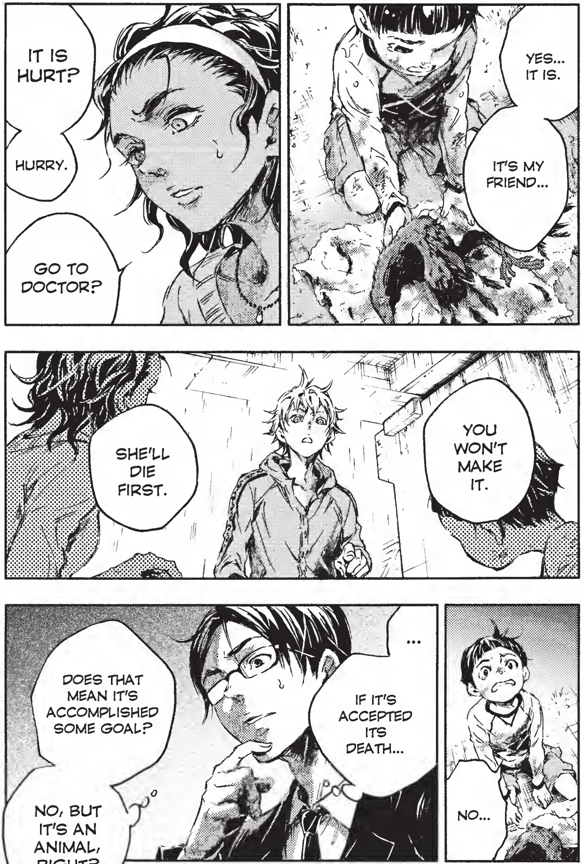

WHAM...
BEE-BOP
GAME BOY
BEE-BOP
RIBBIT.
BEE-BOP
BEE-BOP
RIBBIT. ♪
RIBBIT.
BEE-BOP
BEE-BOP
BEE-BOP
BEE-BOP
SCRATCH
MEOW!
OW!

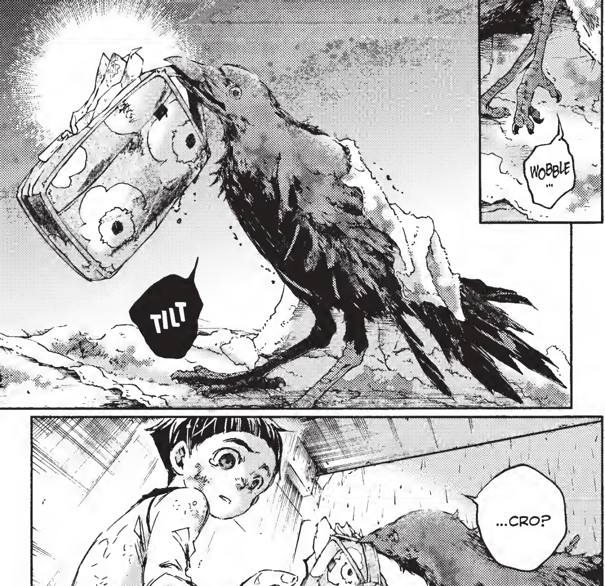

ARGH!
I KNEW THESE THINGS DIDN'T HAVE SOULS!
I FED YOU YESTERDAY! AND YOU DON'T EVEN REMEMBER ME!
Vicious beast, acting all cute.
MROWR!
SPLASH
YOU'RE THE ANIMAL DOCTOR, RIGHT?!

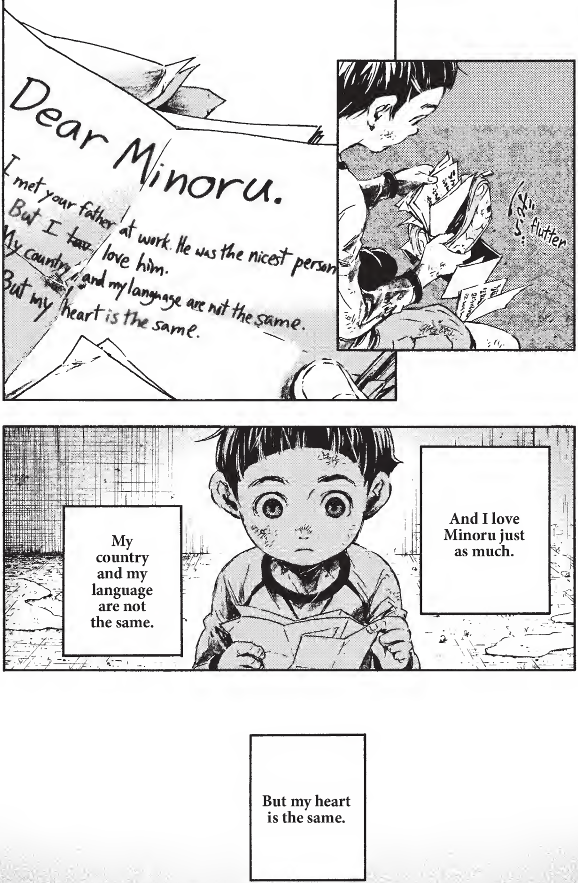

IT'S CRO...
PLEASE... HELP CRO...!
...A CROW?
WE... HAD A FIGHT YESTERDAY.
BUT... IT'S MY FRIEND.
I DON'T WANT IT TO DIE.

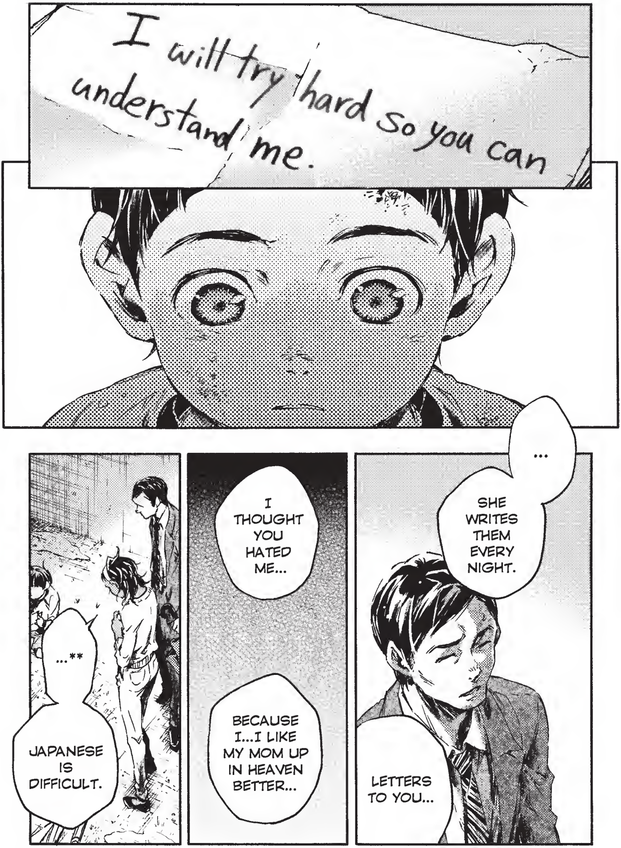

DID IT GET INTO AN ACCIDENT?
I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANYTHING WE CAN ...
...?
WHAT'S THAT IN ITS MOUTH?
HELP IT? WHY?
THIS CROW... ALREADY GAVE ME ITS SOUL'S PERMISSION.
THAT'S THE FEELING I GET.
WHAT?
YOU MEAN... IT'S ALREADY ACCEPTED ITS DEATH?
BUT... ANIMALS DON'T HAVE SOULS.
SPLASH
SPLASH

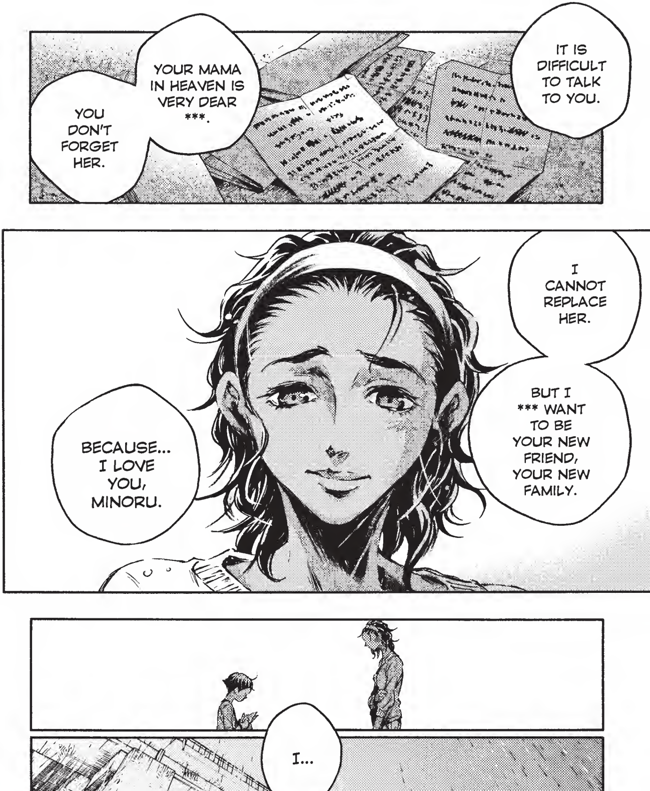

MINORU !
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? CARRYING THAT ANIMAL AROUND...
...! NO, DADDY...
IT'S...
....MINORU'S FRIEND, NO?
WHAT ?

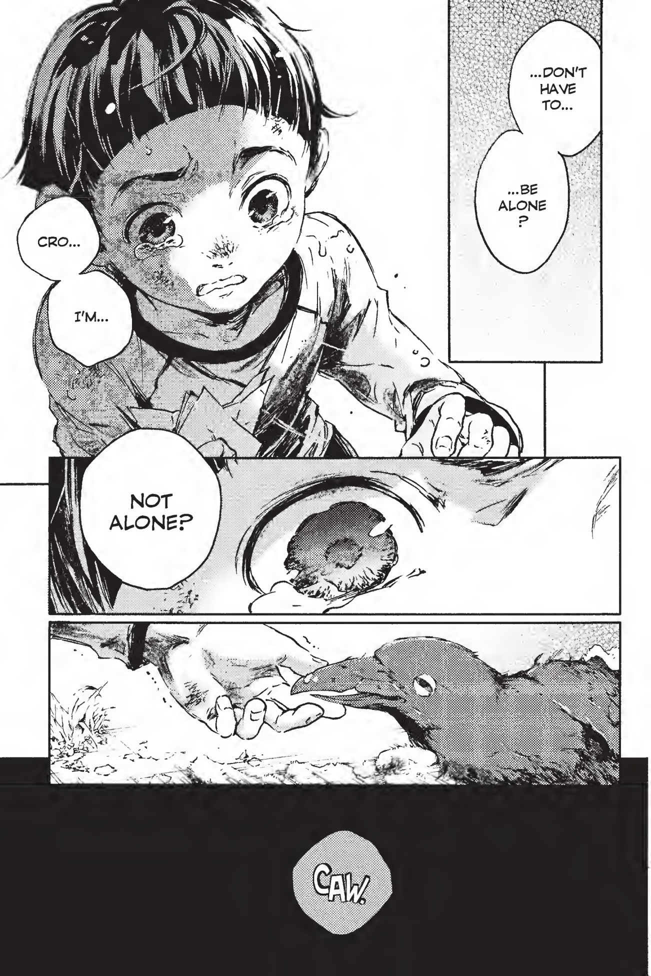

YES... IT IS.
IT'S MY FRIEND...
IT IS HURT?
HURRY.
GO TO DOCTOR?
YOU WON'T MAKE IT.
SHE'LL DIE FIRST.
NO...
...
IF IT'S ACCEPTED ITS DEATH...
DOES THAT MEAN IT'S ACCOMPLISHED SOME GOAL?
NO, BUT IT'S AN ANIMAL, RIGHT?

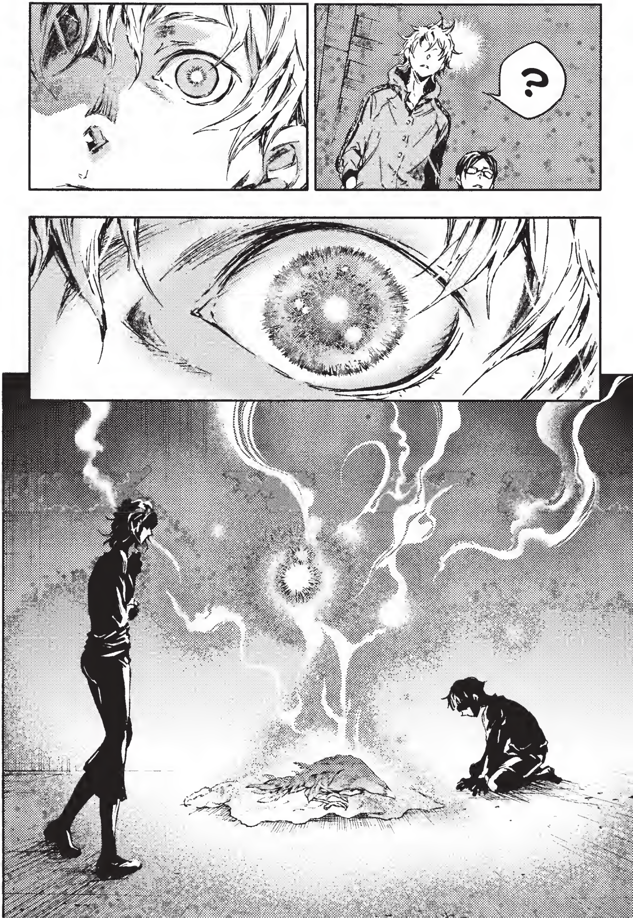

WOBBLE ...
TILT
...CRO?
OH.
THAT...
MY...

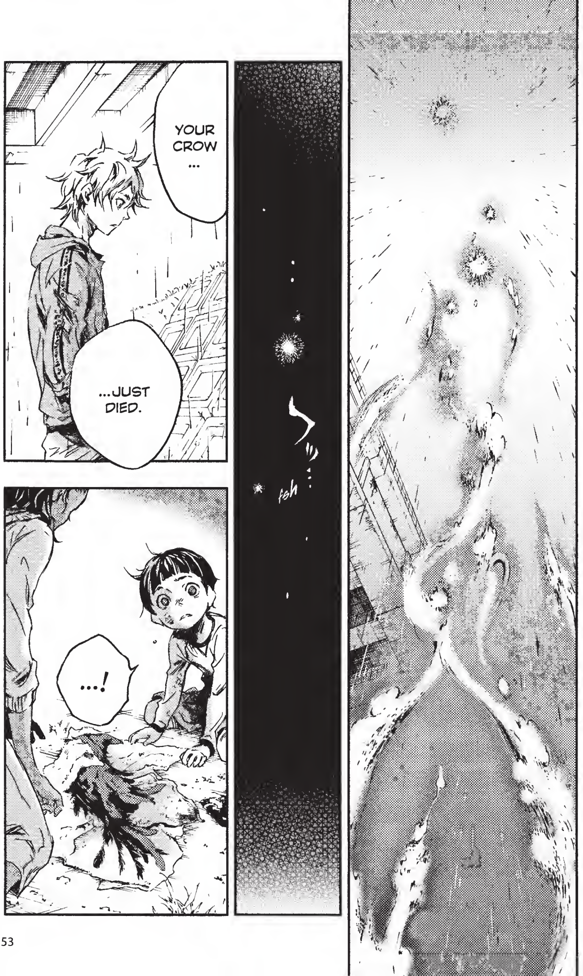

flutter
Dear Minoru.
I met your father at work. He was the nicest person
But I love him.
My country and my language are not the same.
But my heart is the same.
And I love Minoru just as much.
My country and my language are not the same.
But my heart is the same.

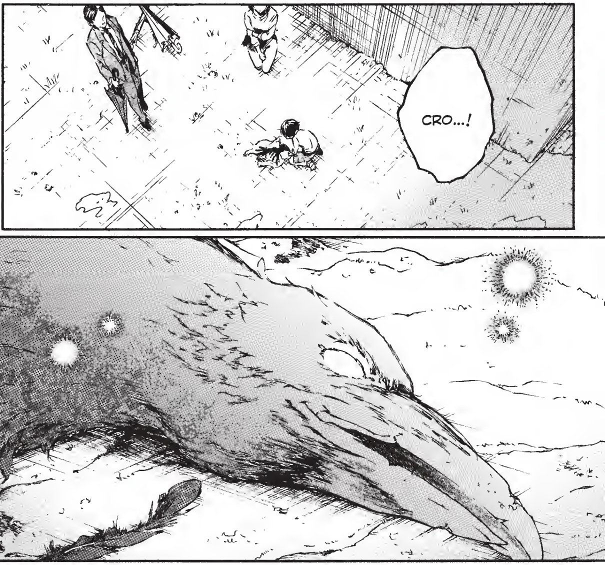

I will try hard so you can understand me.
...
SHE WRITES THEM EVERY NIGHT.
LETTERS TO YOU...
I THOUGHT YOU HATED ME...
BECAUSE I...I LIKE MY MOM UP IN HEAVEN BETTER...
...**
JAPANESE IS DIFFICULT.

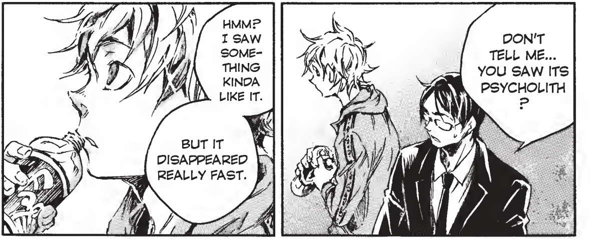

IT IS DIFFICULT TO TALK TO YOU.
YOUR MAMA IN HEAVEN IS VERY DEAR ***.
YOU DON'T FORGET HER.
I CANNOT REPLACE HER.
BUT I *** WANT TO BE YOUR NEW FRIEND, YOUR NEW FAMILY.
BECAUSE... I LOVE YOU, MINORU.
I...

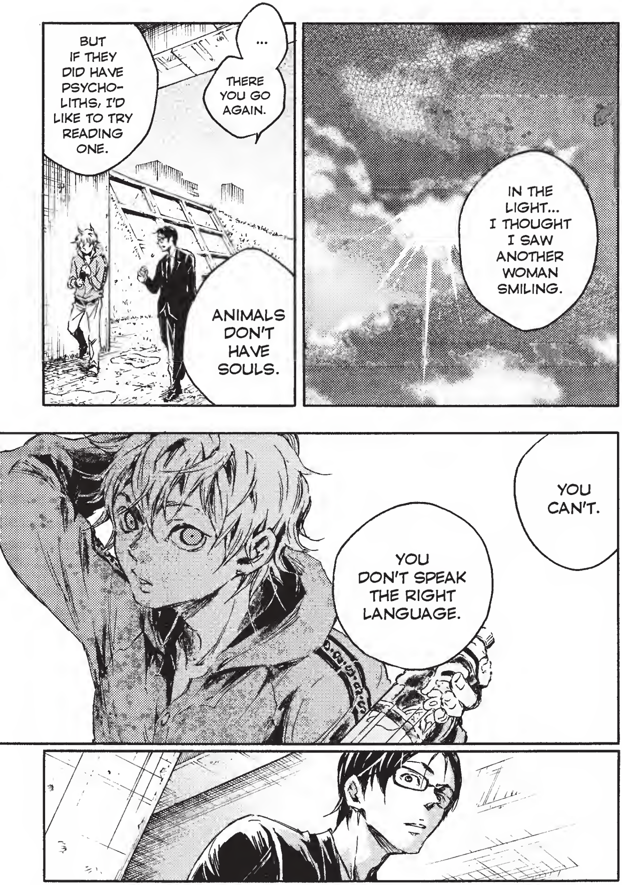

...DON'T HAVE TO...
...BE ALONE?
CRO...
I'M...
NOT ALONE?
CAW.

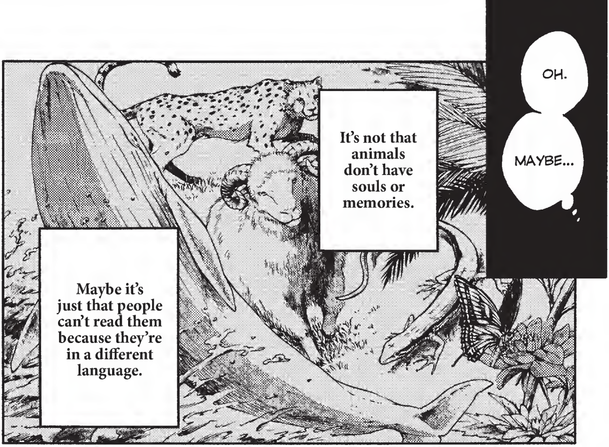


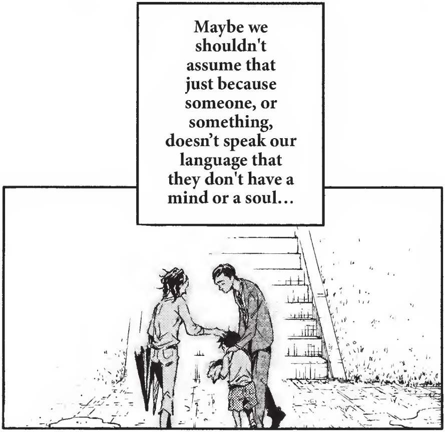

fsh
YOUR CROW ...
...JUST DIED.
...!

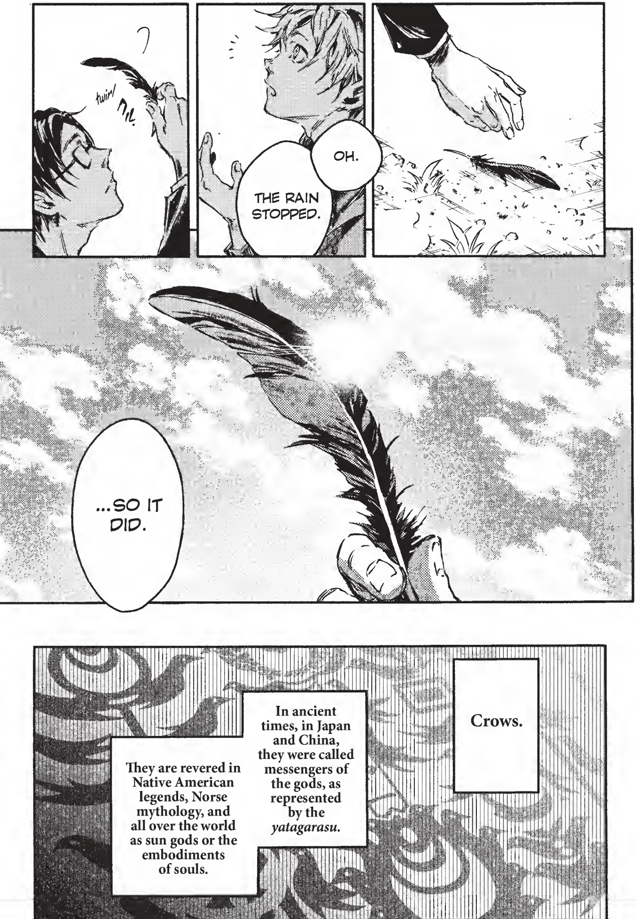

CRO...!


DON'T TELL ME... YOU SAW ITS PSYCHOLITH?
HMM? I SAW SOMETHING KINDA LIKE IT.
BUT IT DISAPPEARED REALLY FAST.


IN THE LIGHT... I THOUGHT I SAW ANOTHER WOMAN SMILING.
ANIMALS DON'T HAVE SOULS.
BUT IF THEY DID HAVE PSYCHOLITHS, I'D LIKE TO TRY READING ONE.
...
THERE YOU GO AGAIN.
YOU CAN'T.
YOU DON'T SPEAK THE RIGHT LANGUAGE.

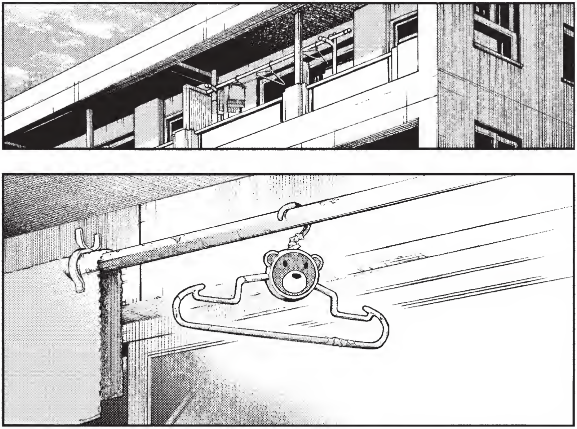

OH.
MAYBE...
It's not that animals don't have souls or memories.
Maybe it's just that people can't read them because they're in a different language.


Maybe we shouldn't assume that just because someone, or something, doesn't speak our language that they don't have a mind or a soul...


OH.
THE RAIN STOPPED.
twirl
...SO IT DID.
Crows.
In ancient times, in Japan and China, they were called messengers of the gods, as represented by the *yatagarasu.*
They are revered in Native American legends, Norse mythology, and all over the world as sun gods or the embodiments of souls.

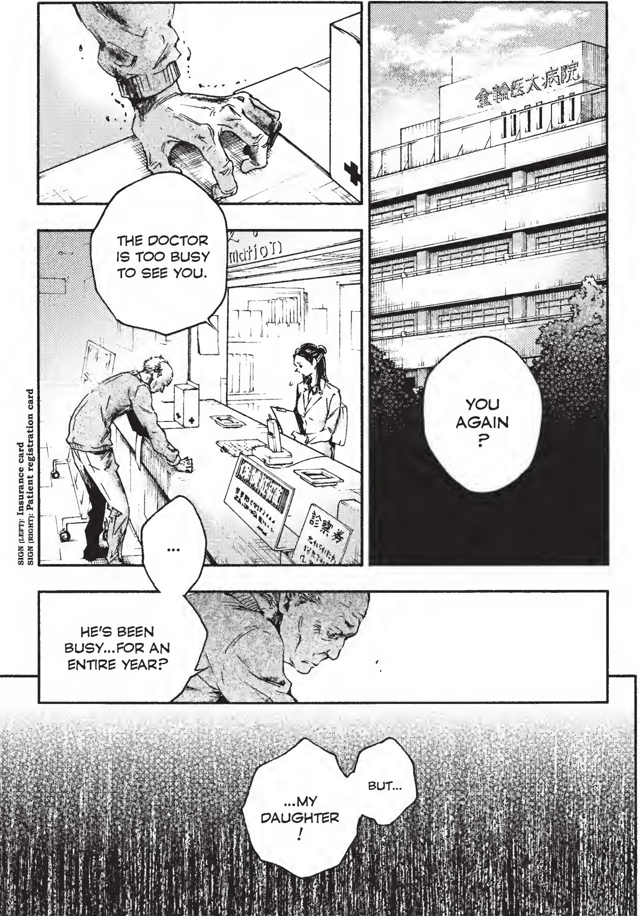
It is said
that when a
crow caws,
it is calling
to the soul.

And that
they are
the birds
that link
this world
to the next.

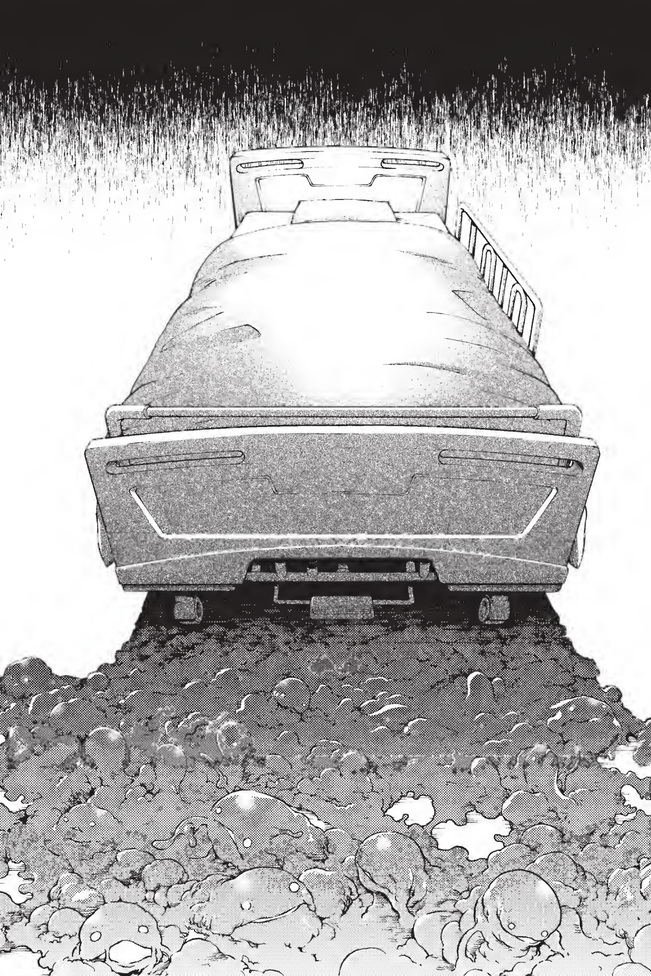


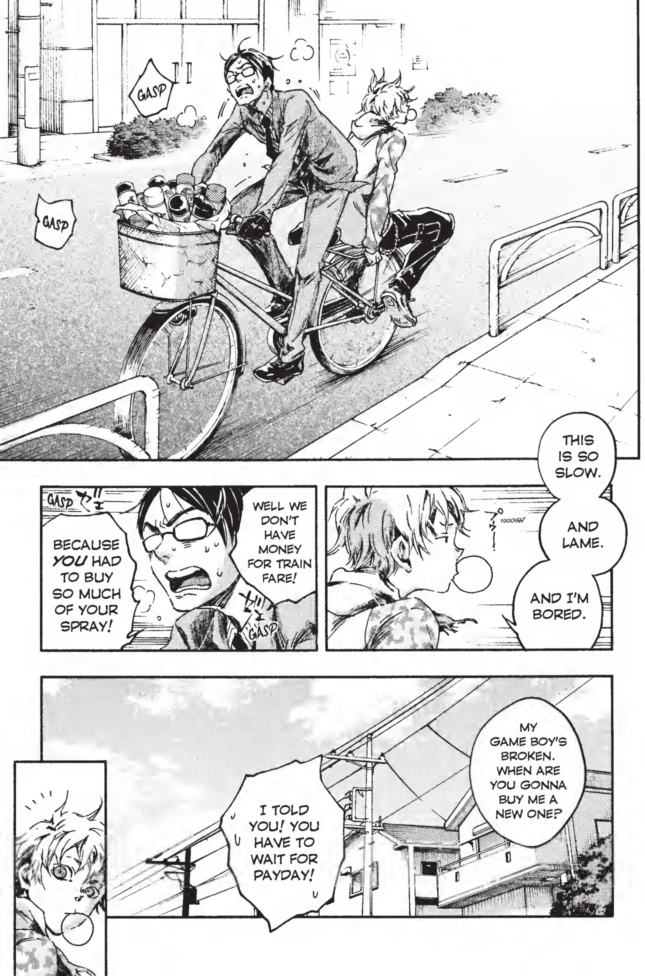
Chapter 10 ✚ Hospital-Acquired Infection (Part One)

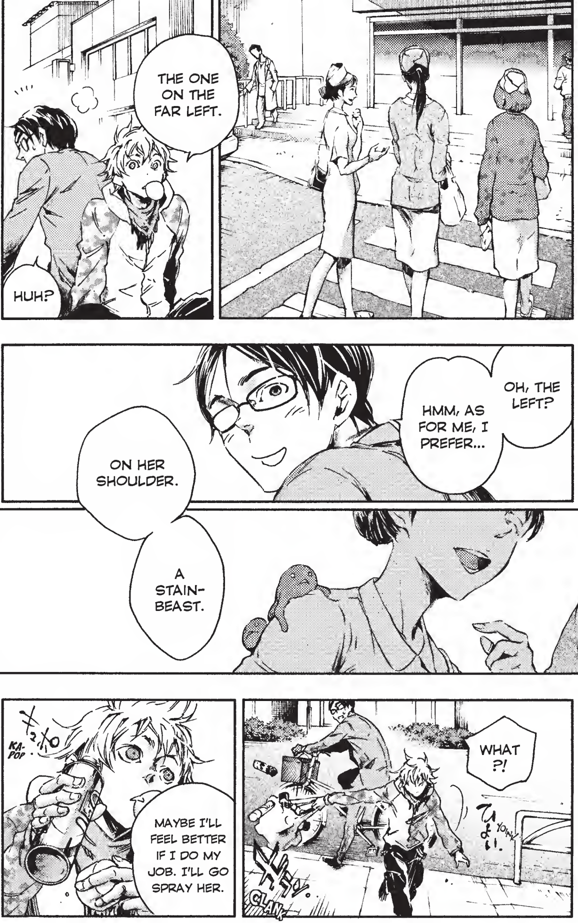
SIGN: Konrin University Hospital

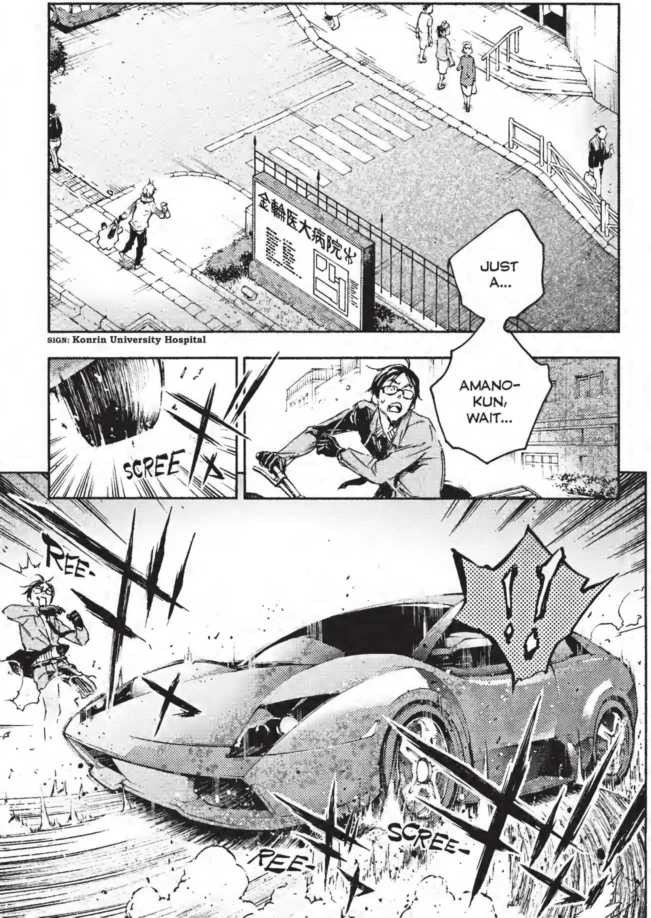

YOU AGAIN?
THE DOCTOR IS TOO BUSY TO SEE YOU.
...
HE'S BEEN BUSY...FOR AN ENTIRE YEAR?
BUT...
...MY DAUGHTER!

SIGN (LEFT): Insurance card
SIGN (RIGHT): Patient registration card

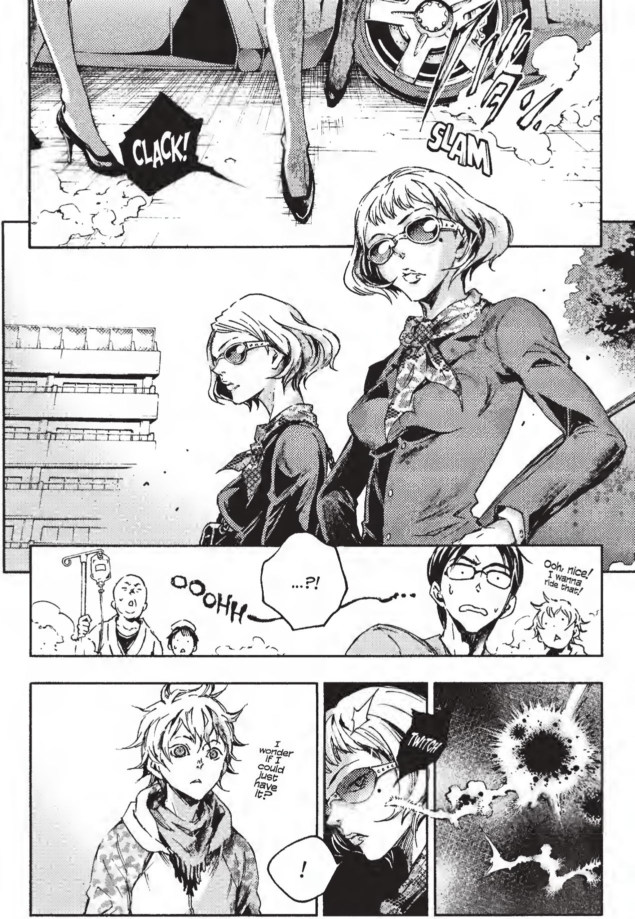


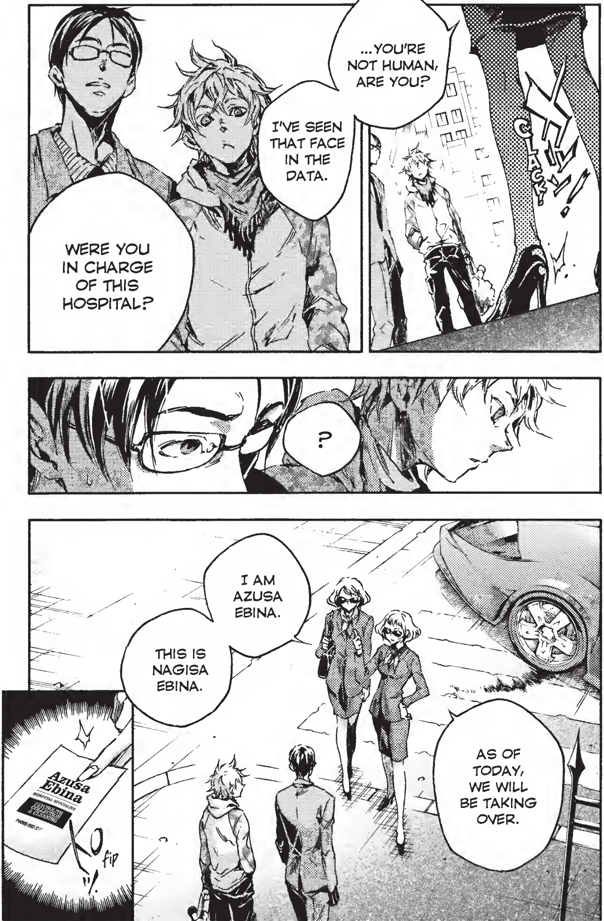

GASP
GASP
THIS IS SO SLOW.
AND LAME.
AND I'M BORED.
FOOOSH
WELL WE DON'T HAVE MONEY FOR TRAIN FARE!
BECAUSE *YOU* HAD TO BUY SO MUCH OF YOUR SPRAY!
GASP
GASP
MY GAME BOY'S BROKEN. WHEN ARE YOU GONNA BUY ME A NEW ONE?
I TOLD YOU! YOU HAVE TO WAIT FOR PAYDAY!

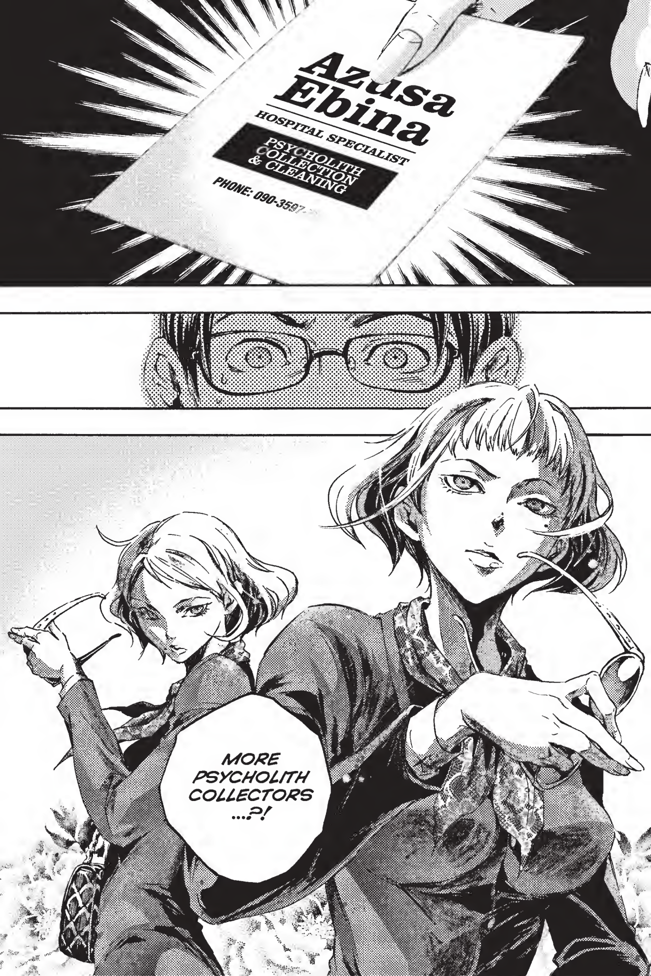

THE ONE ON THE FAR LEFT.
HUH?
OH, THE LEFT?
HMM, AS FOR ME, I PREFER...
ON HER SHOULDER.
A STAIN-BEAST.
WHAT ?!
YOINK
CLANK
KA-POP
MAYBE I'LL FEEL BETTER IF I DO MY JOB. I'LL GO SPRAY HER.

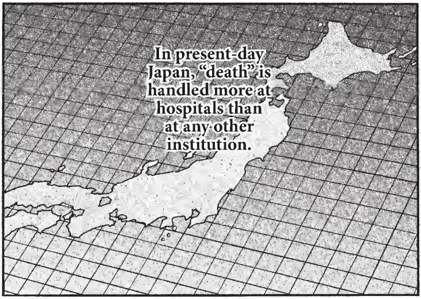

金輪医大病院
JUST A...
AMANO-KUN, WAIT...
SCREE
!!
REE-
SCREE-
REE-

SIGN: Konrin University Hospital

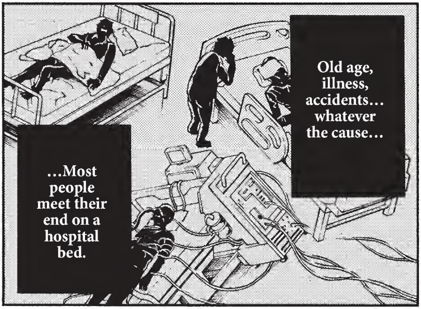

SLAM
CLACK!
Ooh, nice! I wanna ride that!
...?!
OOOHH—...
TWITCH
!
I wonder if I could just have it?


CLACK!
...YOU'RE NOT HUMAN, ARE YOU?
I'VE SEEN THAT FACE IN THE DATA.
WERE YOU IN CHARGE OF THIS HOSPITAL?
?
I AM AZUSA EBINA.
THIS IS NAGISA EBINA.
AS OF TODAY, WE WILL BE TAKING OVER.
Azusa Ebina
HOSPITAL SPECIALIST
PSYCHOLITH COLLECTION & CLEANING
PHONE 090-3
fip


Azusa Ebina
HOSPITAL SPECIALIST
PSYCHOLITH COLLECTION & CLEANING
PHONE: 090-3597-
MORE PSYCHOLITH COLLECTORS ...?!



In present-day Japan, "death" is handled more at hospitals than at any other institution.

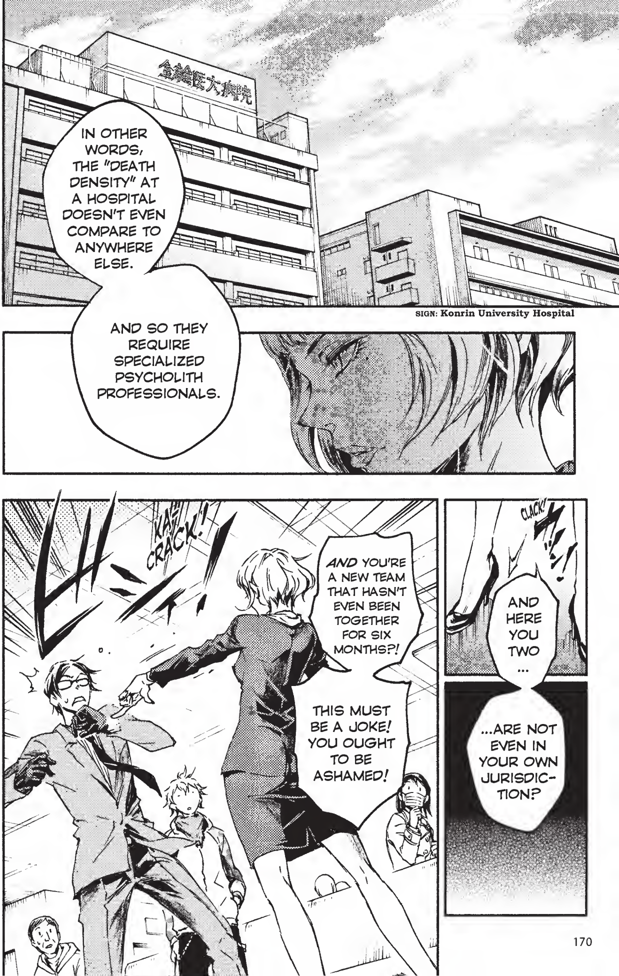


Old age, illness, accidents… whatever the cause…

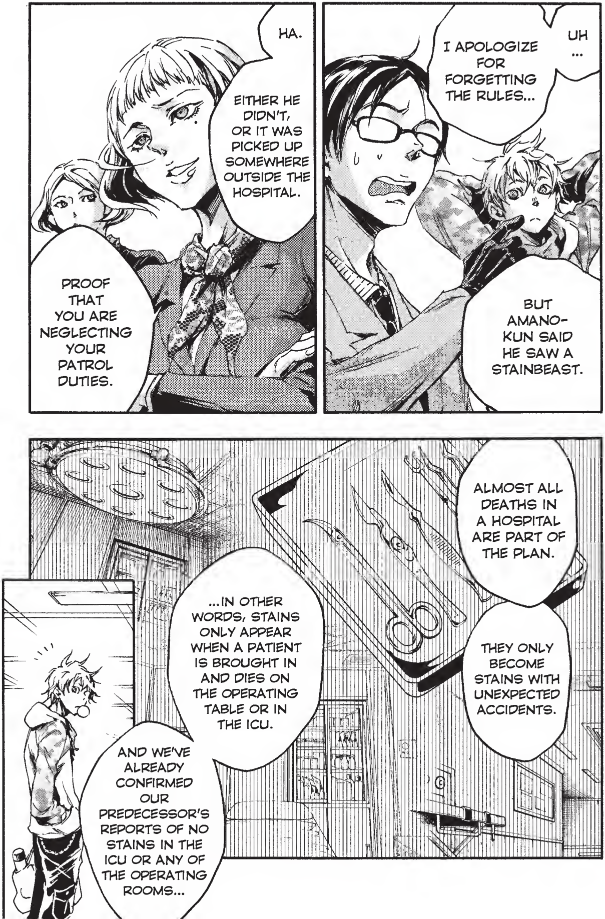
…Most people meet their end on a hospital bed.

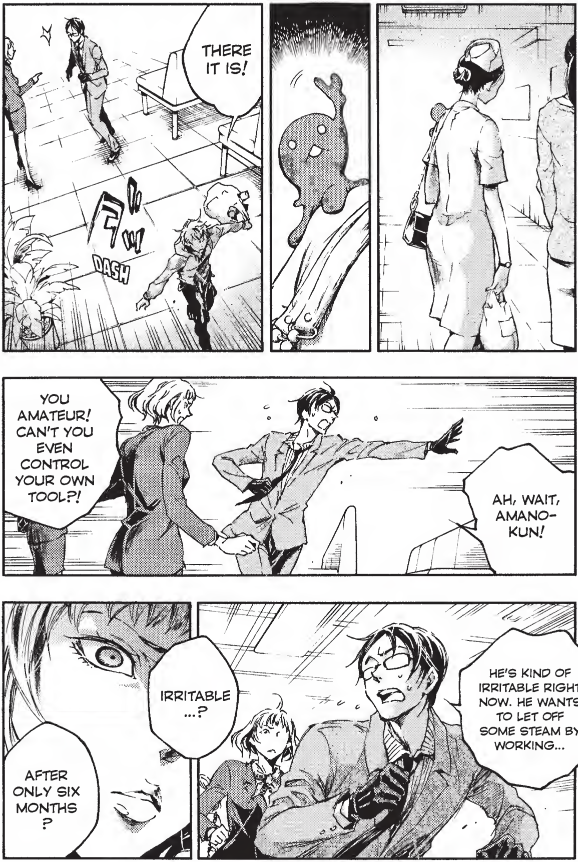
Close to one million people die in medical institutions across the nation each year.

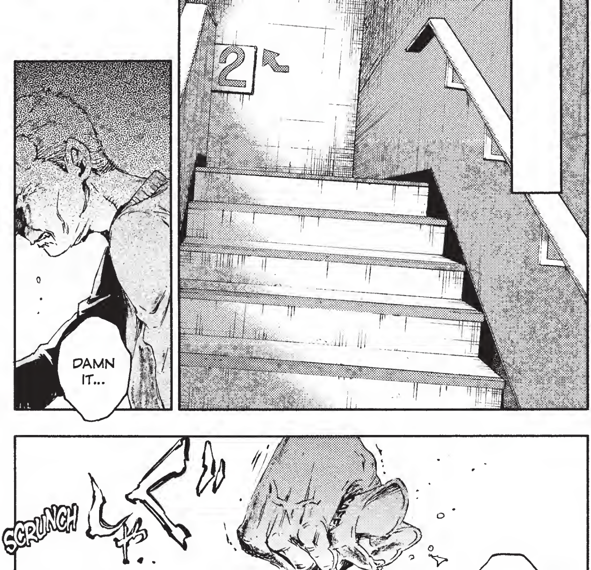
That comes out to approximately three thousand every day.

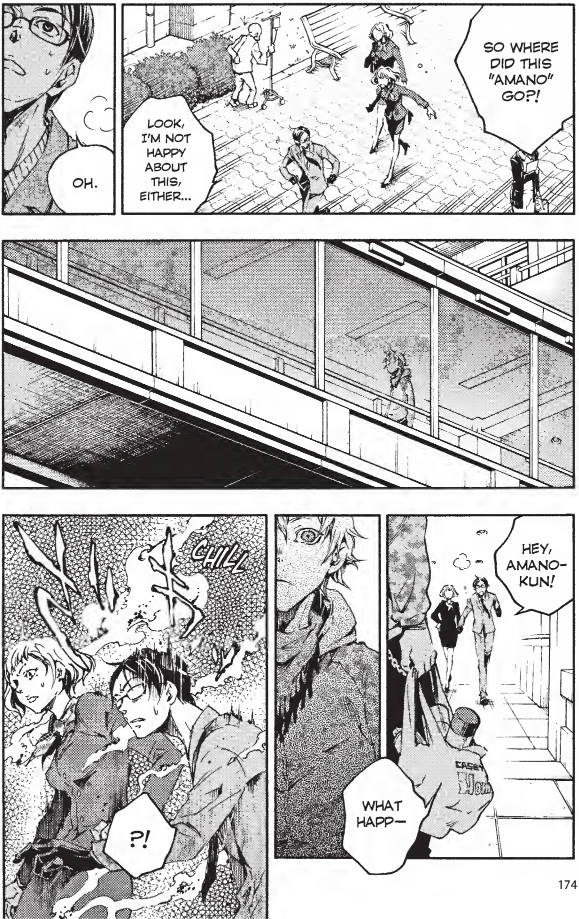

金輪医大病院
IN OTHER WORDS, THE "DEATH DENSITY" AT A HOSPITAL DOESN'T EVEN COMPARE TO ANYWHERE ELSE.
AND SO THEY REQUIRE SPECIALIZED PSYCHOLITH PROFESSIONALS.
CLACK!
AND HERE YOU TWO ...
...ARE NOT EVEN IN YOUR OWN JURISDICTION?
KA-CRACK!
AND YOU'RE A NEW TEAM THAT HASN'T EVEN BEEN TOGETHER FOR SIX MONTHS?!
THIS MUST BE A JOKE! YOU OUGHT TO BE ASHAMED!

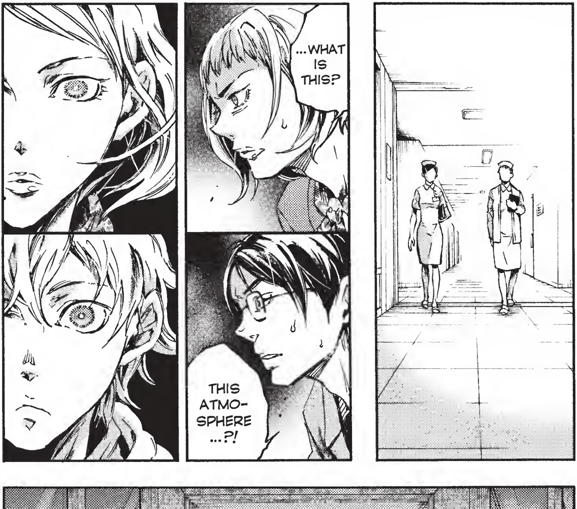
SIGN: Konrin University Hospital

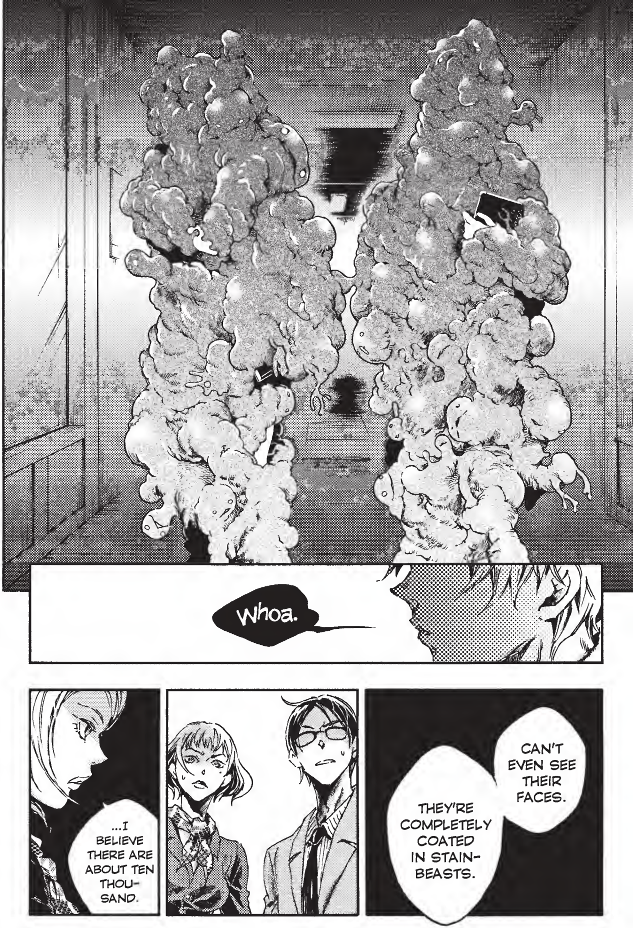

UH ...
I APOLOGIZE FOR FORGETTING THE RULES...
BUT AMANO-KUN SAID HE SAW A STAINBEAST.
HA.
EITHER HE DIDN'T, OR IT WAS PICKED UP SOMEWHERE OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL.
PROOF THAT YOU ARE NEGLECTING YOUR PATROL DUTIES.
ALMOST ALL DEATHS IN A HOSPITAL ARE PART OF THE PLAN.
THEY ONLY BECOME STAINS WITH UNEXPECTED ACCIDENTS.
...IN OTHER WORDS, STAINS ONLY APPEAR WHEN A PATIENT IS BROUGHT IN AND DIES ON THE OPERATING TABLE OR IN THE ICU.
AND WE'VE ALREADY CONFIRMED OUR PREDECESSOR'S REPORTS OF NO STAINS IN THE ICU OR ANY OF THE OPERATING ROOMS...

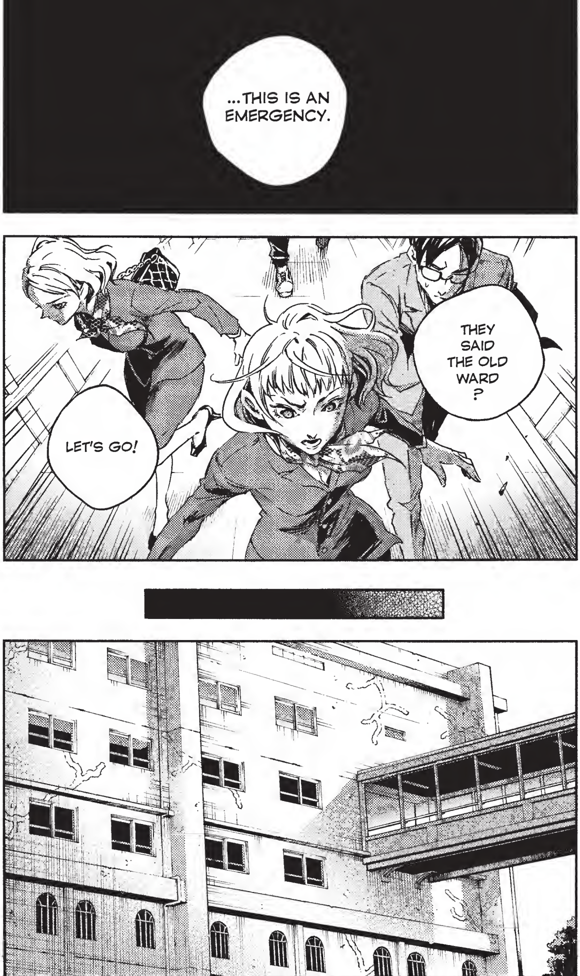

THERE IT IS!
DASH
AH, WAIT, AMANO-KUN!
YOU AMATEUR! CAN'T YOU EVEN CONTROL YOUR OWN TOOL?!
HE'S KIND OF IRRITABLE RIGHT NOW. HE WANTS TO LET OFF SOME STEAM BY WORKING...
IRRITABLE...?
AFTER ONLY SIX MONTHS?

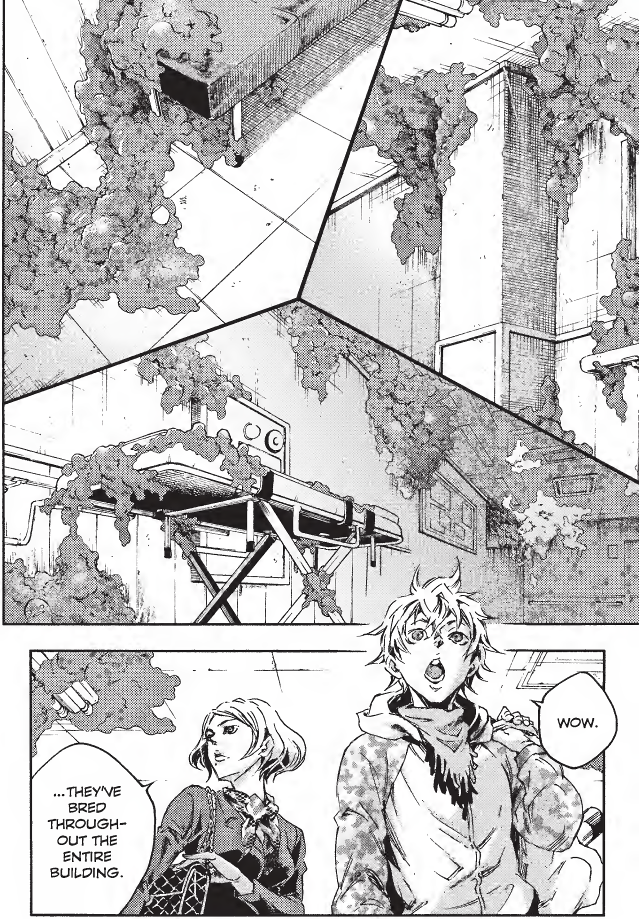

2
DAMN IT...
SCRUNCH
SHE WASN'T MEANT TO DIE...
...

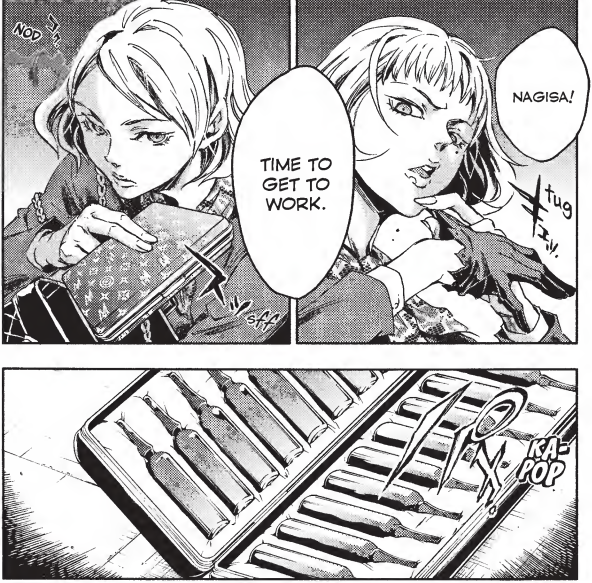

SO WHERE DID THIS "AMANO" GO?!
LOOK, I'M NOT HAPPY ABOUT THIS, EITHER...
OH.
HEY, AMANO-KUN!
CASEY
WHAT HAPP—
CHILL
?!

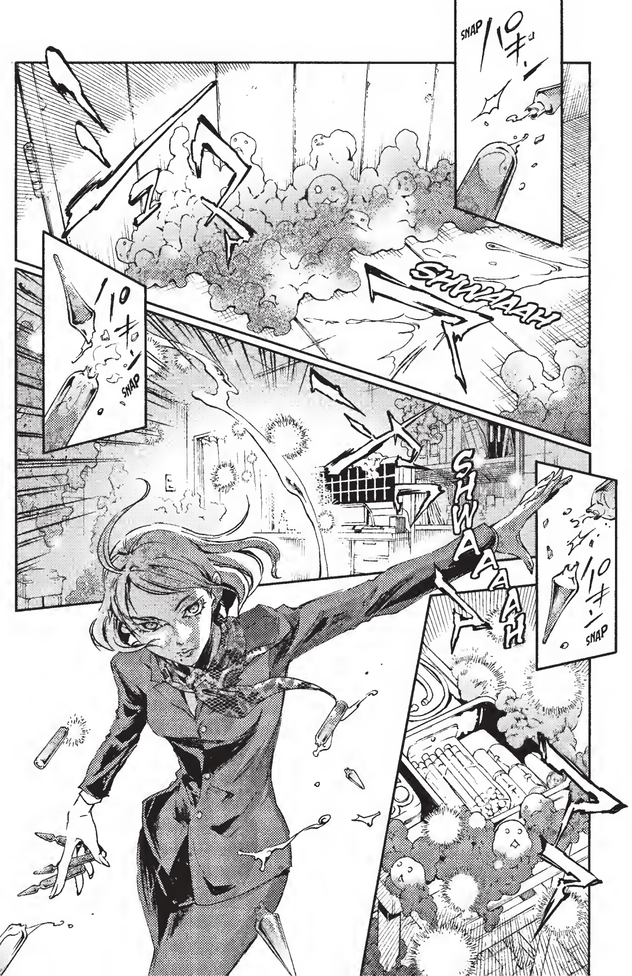

...WHAT IS THIS?
THIS ATMOSPHERE...?!
I'M JUST SO TIRED LATELY.
ME, TOO. MY SHOULDERS ARE SO HEAVY...
THE AIR IS JUST SO STALE IN THE OLD WARD.

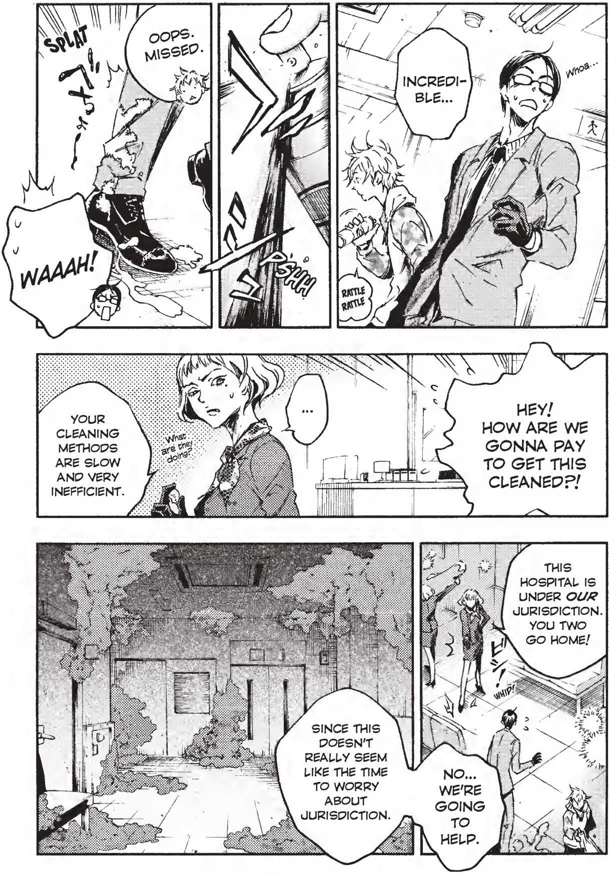

Whoa.
CAN'T EVEN SEE THEIR FACES.
THEY'RE COMPLETELY COATED IN STAIN-BEASTS.
...I BELIEVE THERE ARE ABOUT TEN THOUSAND.

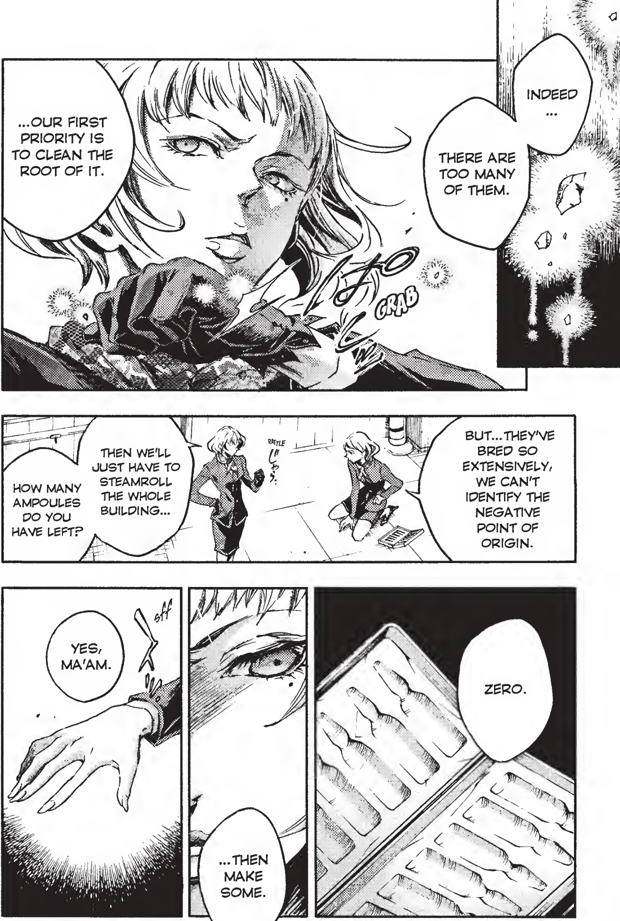

...THIS IS AN EMERGENCY.
THEY SAID THE OLD WARD?
LET'S GO!

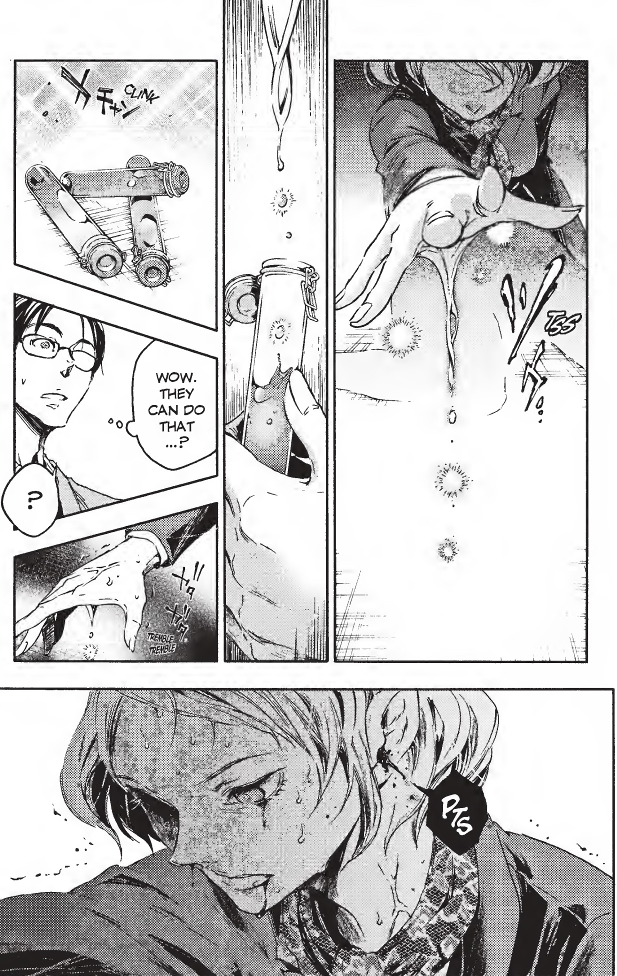

WOW.
...THEY'VE BRED THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE BUILDING.

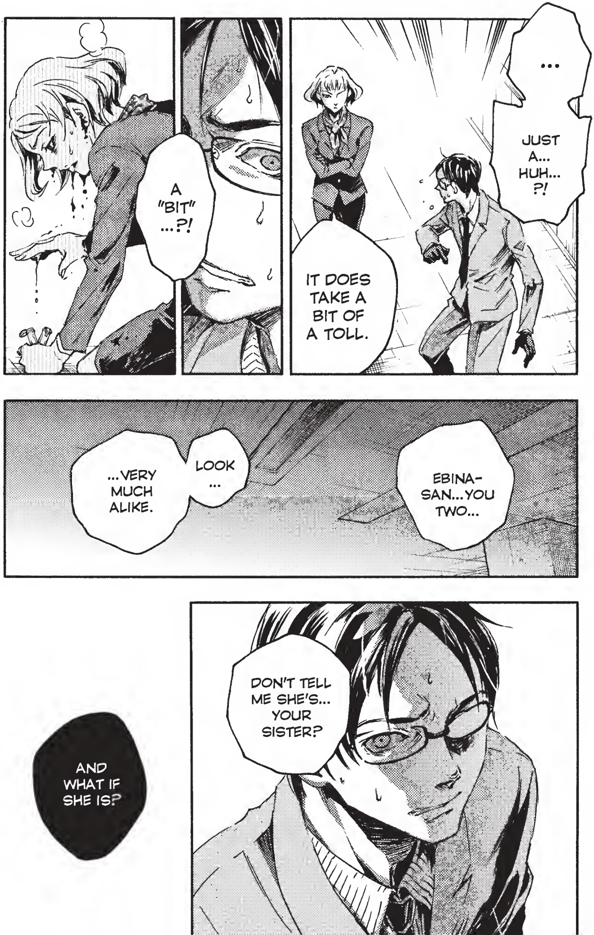

NAGISA!
tug
TIME TO GET TO WORK.
NOD
sff
KA-POP
SNAP

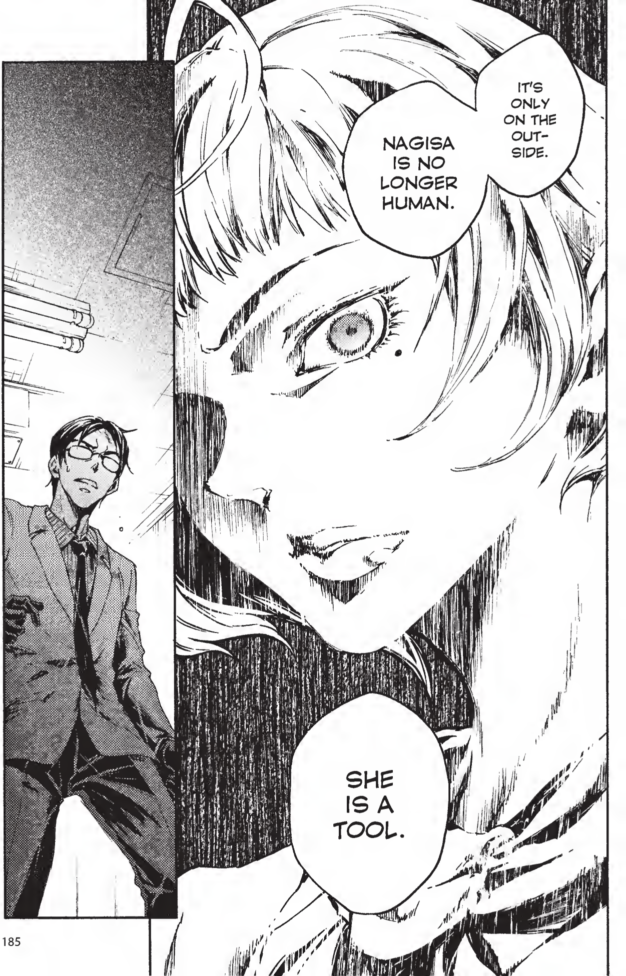

SNAP
パキッ
シュワッ
SHWAAAH
パキッ
SNAP
シュワッ
SHWAAAAAH
パキッ
SNAP


Whoa...
INCREDIBLE...
RATTLE RATTLE
PSHH
OOPS. MISSED.
SPLAT
WAAAH!
HEY! HOW ARE WE GONNA PAY TO GET THIS CLEANED?!
...
What are they doing?
YOUR CLEANING METHODS ARE SLOW AND VERY INEFFICIENT.
THIS HOSPITAL IS UNDER *OUR* JURISDICTION. YOU TWO GO HOME!
WHIP!
NO... WE'RE GOING TO HELP.
SINCE THIS DOESN'T REALLY SEEM LIKE THE TIME TO WORRY ABOUT JURISDICTION.

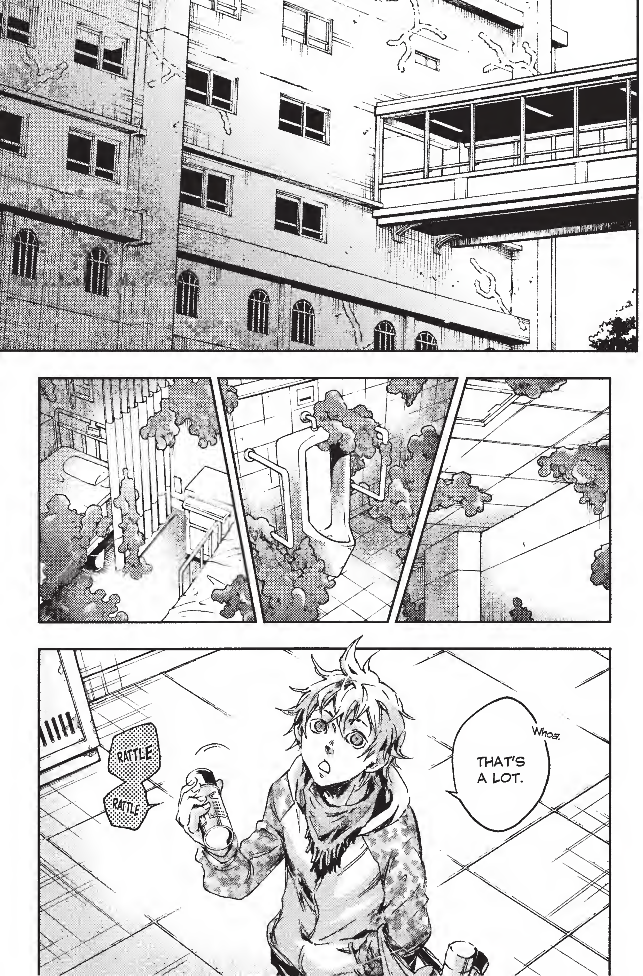

INDEED...
THERE ARE TOO MANY OF THEM.
...OUR FIRST PRIORITY IS TO CLEAN THE ROOT OF IT.
GRAB
BUT...THEY'VE BRED SO EXTENSIVELY, WE CAN'T IDENTIFY THE NEGATIVE POINT OF ORIGIN.
RATTLE
THEN WE'LL JUST HAVE TO STEAMROLL THE WHOLE BUILDING...
HOW MANY AMPOULES DO YOU HAVE LEFT?
ZERO.
...THEN MAKE SOME.
sff
YES, MA'AM.

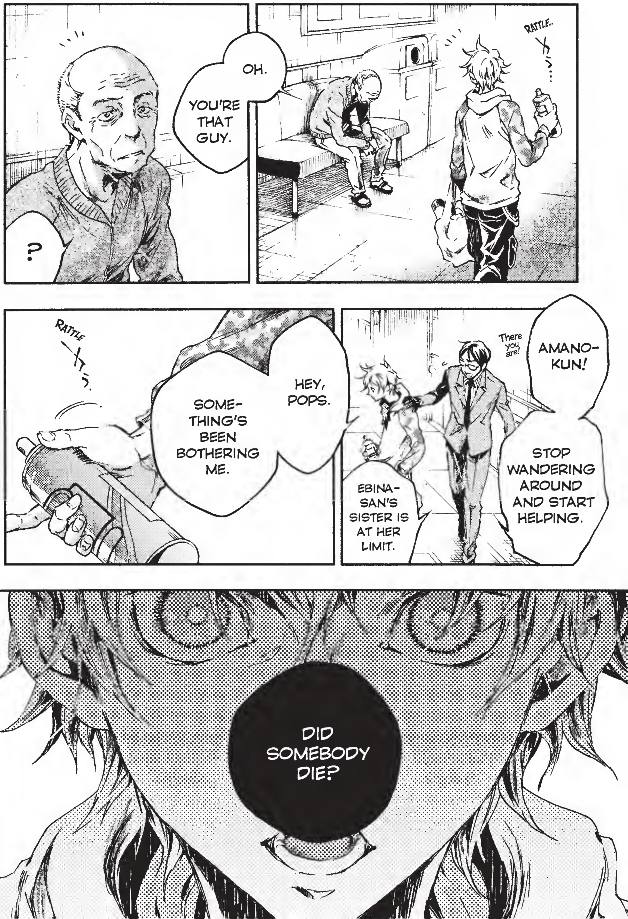

TSS
CLINK
WOW. THEY CAN DO THAT ...?
?
TREMBLE TREMBLE
PTS

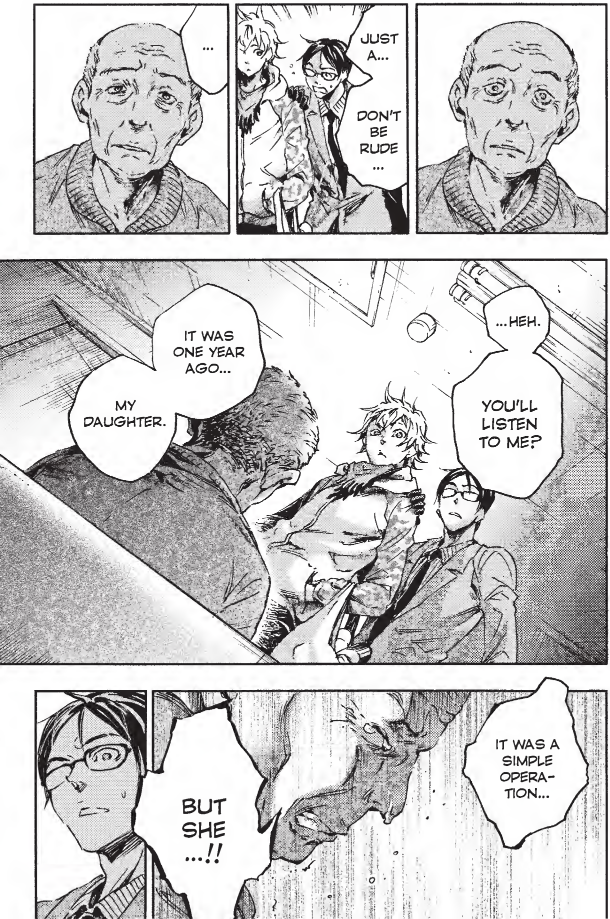

...
JUST A... HUH... ?!
IT DOES TAKE A BIT OF A TOLL.
A "BIT" ...?!
EBINA-SAN...YOU TWO...
LOOK ...
...VERY MUCH ALIKE.
DON'T TELL ME SHE'S... YOUR SISTER?
AND WHAT IF SHE IS?

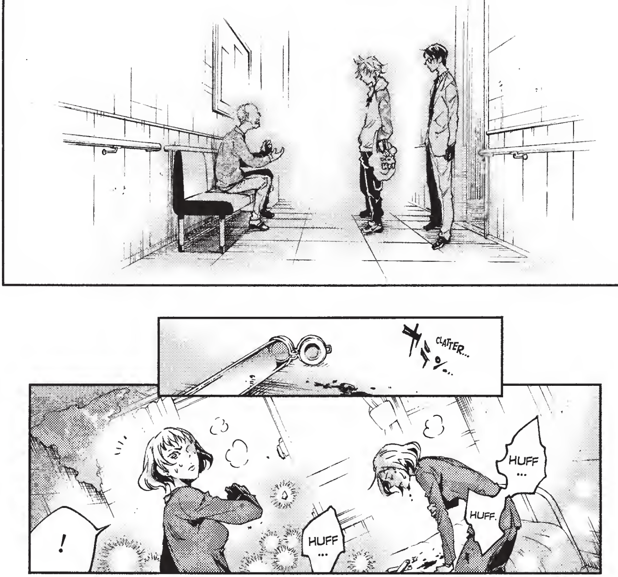

IT'S ONLY ON THE OUTSIDE.
NAGISA IS NO LONGER HUMAN.
SHE IS A TOOL.

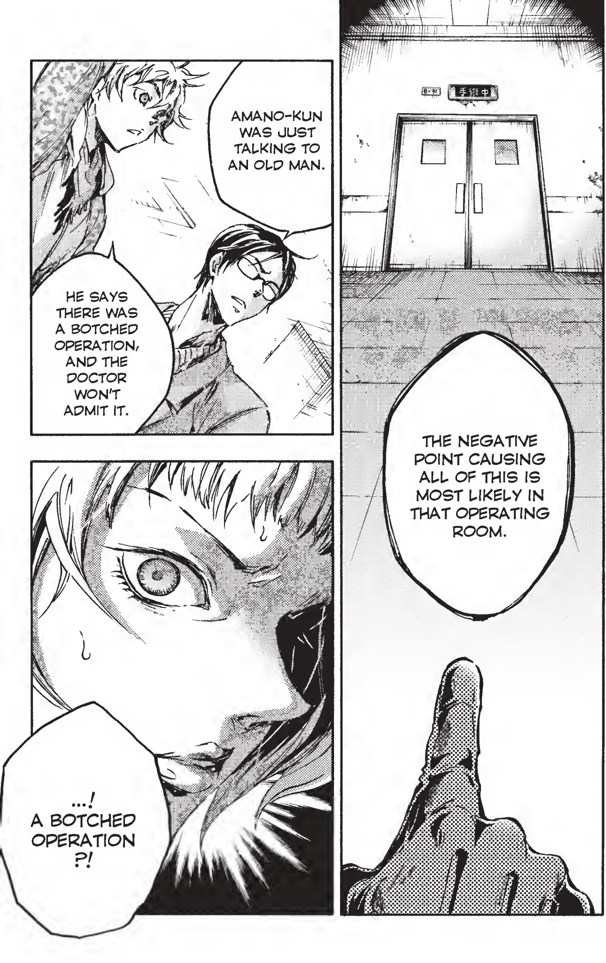
Chapter 11 Hospital-Acquired Infection (Part Two)


Whoa.
THAT'S A LOT.
RATTLE
RATTLE

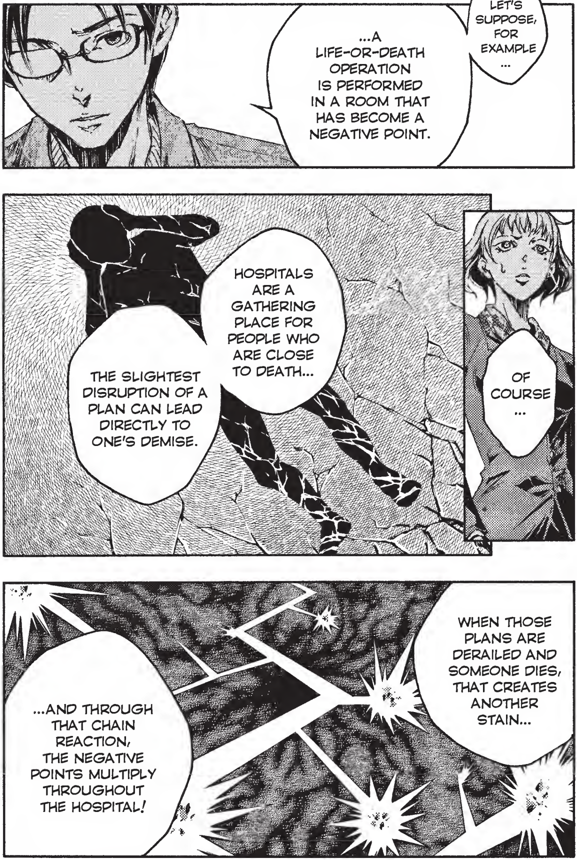

RATTLE...
OH.
YOU'RE THAT GUY.
?
There you are!
AMANO-KUN!
STOP WANDERING AROUND AND START HELPING.
EBINA-SAN'S SISTER IS AT HER LIMIT.
RATTLE
HEY, POPS.
SOMETHING'S BEEN BOTHERING ME.
DID SOMEBODY DIE?

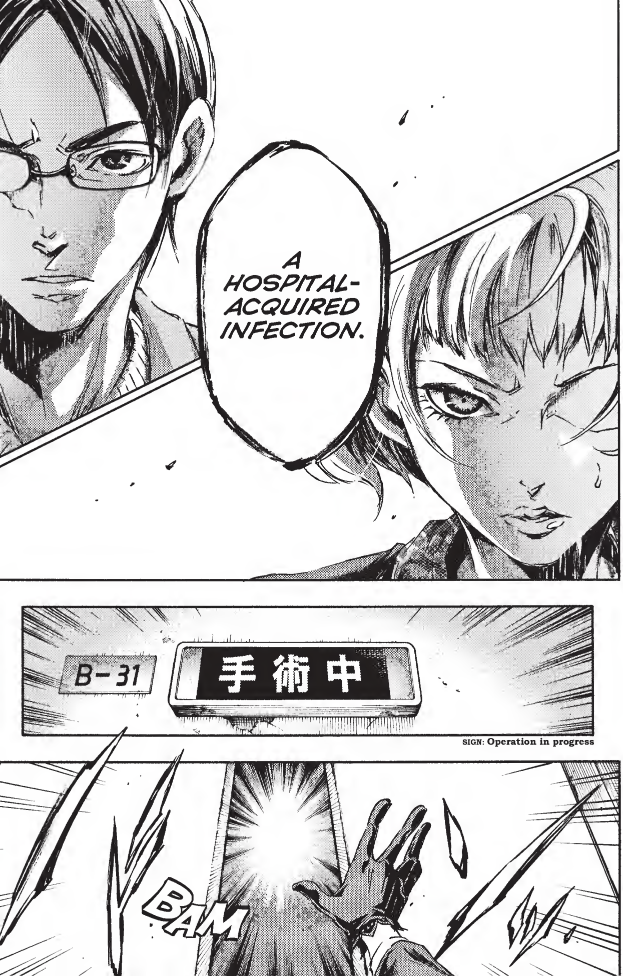

JUST A...
DON'T BE RUDE...
...
...HEH.
YOU'LL LISTEN TO ME?
IT WAS ONE YEAR AGO...
MY DAUGHTER.
IT WAS A SIMPLE OPERATION...
BUT SHE ...!!


CLATTER...
HUFF...
HUFF.
HUFF...
!
OUT FOR A LEISURELY STROLL?
THAT'S FINE WITH ME. THIS IS OUR JURISDICTION, AFTER ALL.
...
THAT WAY.

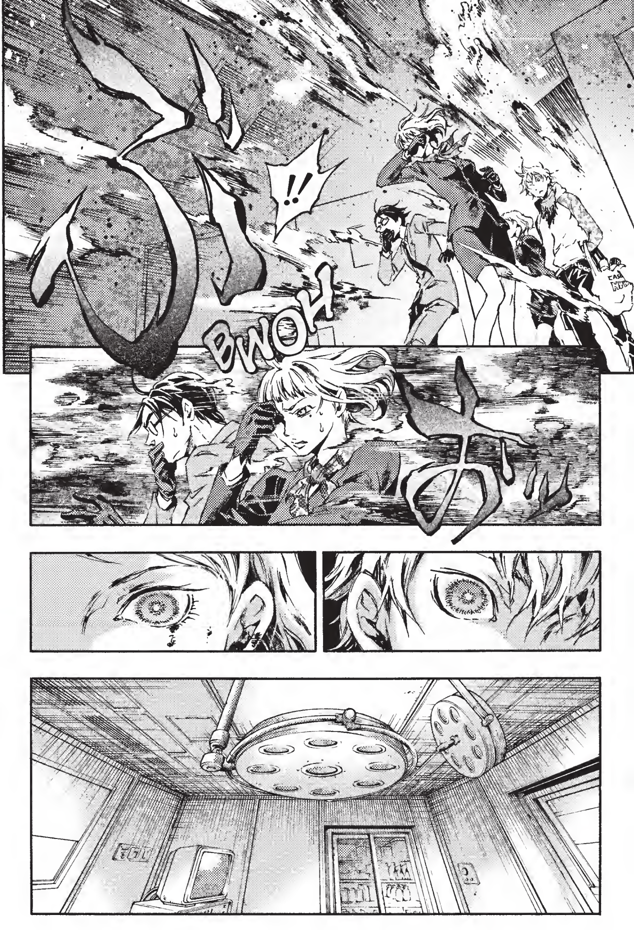

手術中
THE NEGATIVE POINT CAUSING ALL OF THIS IS MOST LIKELY IN THAT OPERATING ROOM.
AMANO-KUN WAS JUST TALKING TO AN OLD MAN.
HE SAYS THERE WAS A BOTCHED OPERATION, AND THE DOCTOR WON'T ADMIT IT.
...! A BOTCHED OPERATION ?!

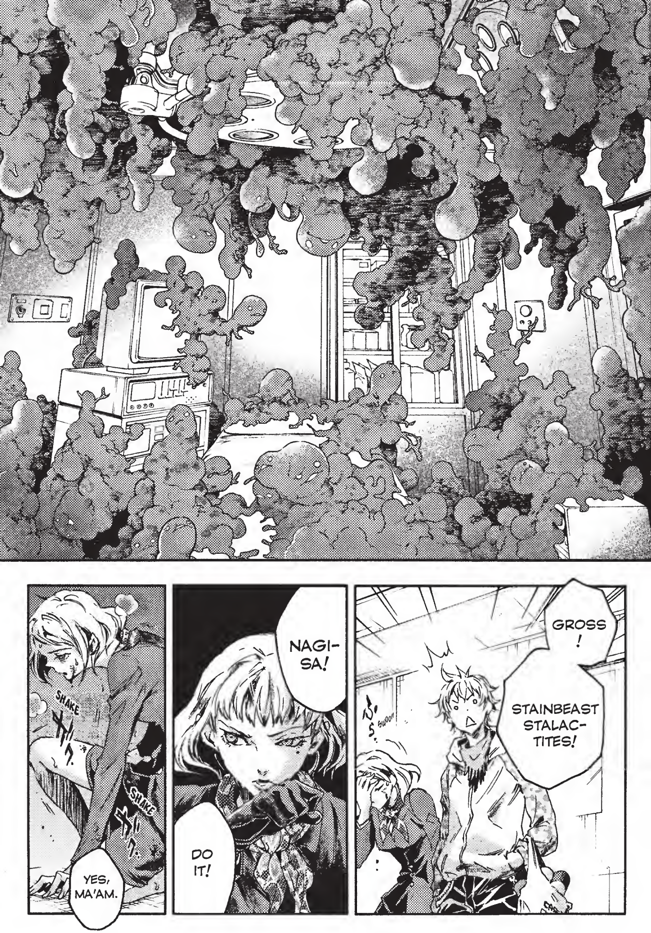
SIGN: Operation in progress

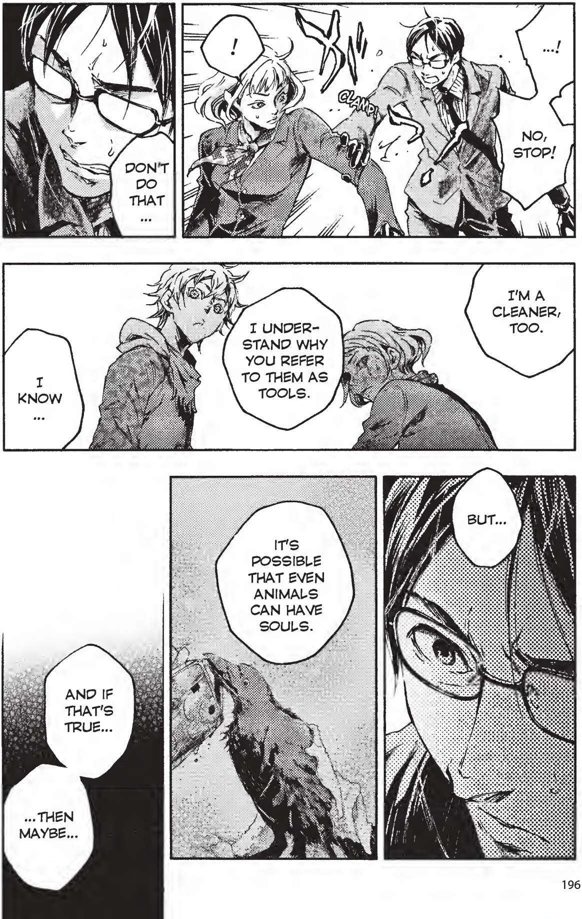

LET'S SUPPOSE, FOR EXAMPLE ...
...A LIFE-OR-DEATH OPERATION IS PERFORMED IN A ROOM THAT HAS BECOME A NEGATIVE POINT.
HOSPITALS ARE A GATHERING PLACE FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE CLOSE TO DEATH...
THE SLIGHTEST DISRUPTION OF A PLAN CAN LEAD DIRECTLY TO ONE'S DEMISE.
OF COURSE ...
WHEN THOSE PLANS ARE DERAILED AND SOMEONE DIES, THAT CREATES ANOTHER STAIN...
...AND THROUGH THAT CHAIN REACTION, THE NEGATIVE POINTS MULTIPLY THROUGHOUT THE HOSPITAL!

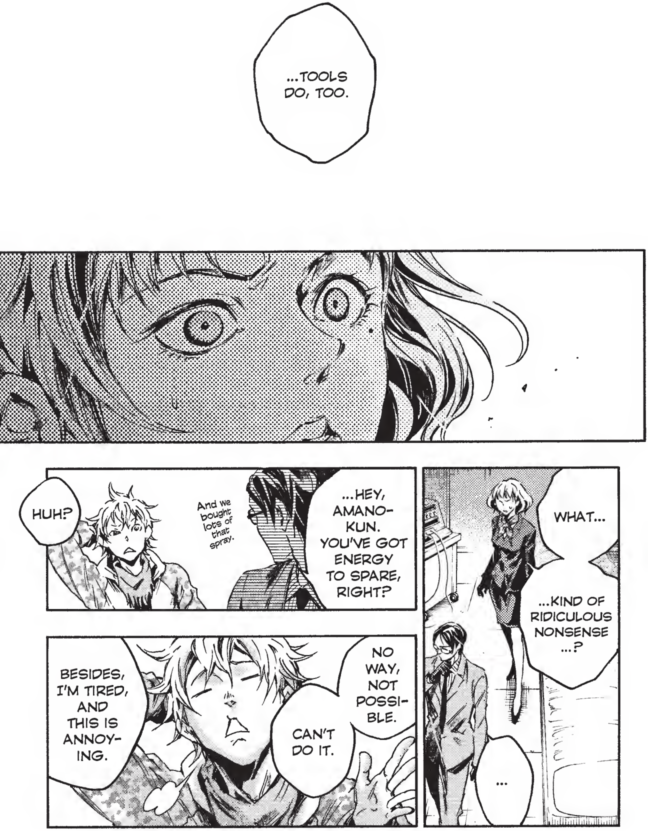

A HOSPITAL-ACQUIRED INFECTION.
B-31
手術中
BAM

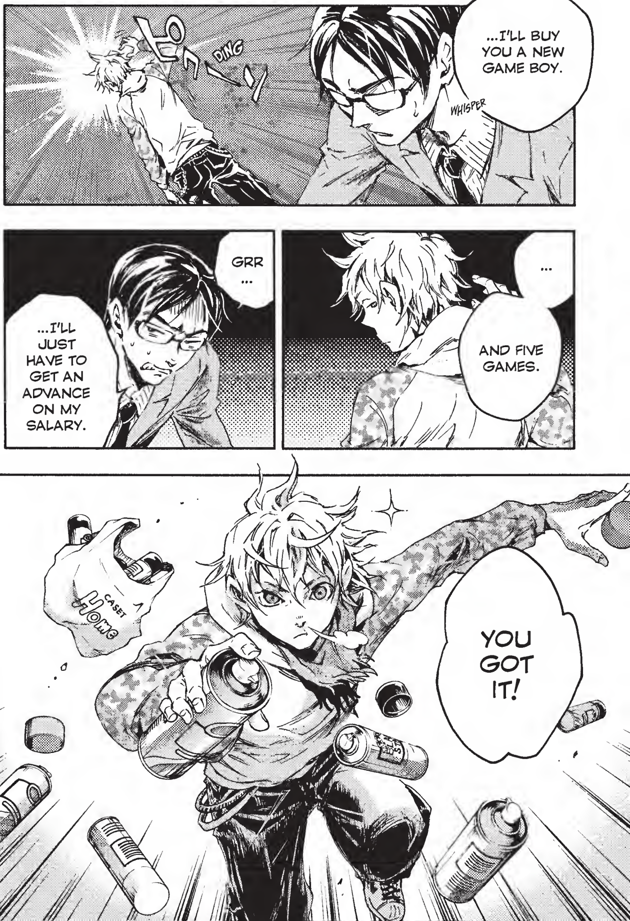
SIGN: Operation in progress


!!
BWOH

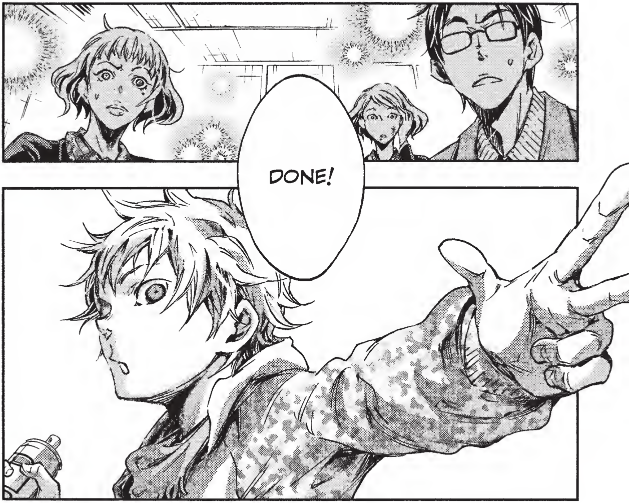

GROSS!
STAINBEAST STALACTITES!
ふら
SWOON
NAGI-SA!
DO IT!
SHAKE
SHAKE
YES, MA'AM.

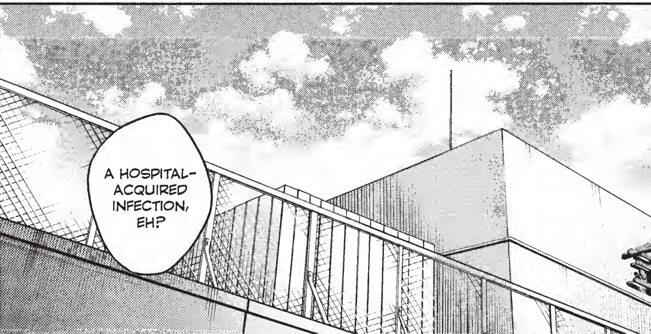

...!
NO, STOP!
!
CLAMP!
DON'T DO THAT ...
I'M A CLEANER, TOO.
I UNDERSTAND WHY YOU REFER TO THEM AS TOOLS.
I KNOW ...
BUT...
IT'S POSSIBLE THAT EVEN ANIMALS CAN HAVE SOULS.
AND IF THAT'S TRUE...
...THEN MAYBE...

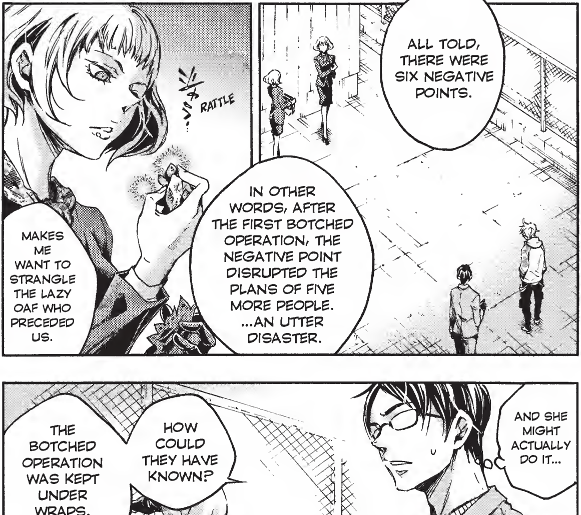

...TOOLS DO, TOO.
WHAT...
...KIND OF RIDICULOUS NONSENSE ...?
...
...HEY, AMANO-KUN. YOU'VE GOT ENERGY TO SPARE, RIGHT?
And we bought lots of that spray.
HUH?
NO WAY, NOT POSSIBLE.
CAN'T DO IT.
BESIDES, I'M TIRED, AND THIS IS ANNOYING.

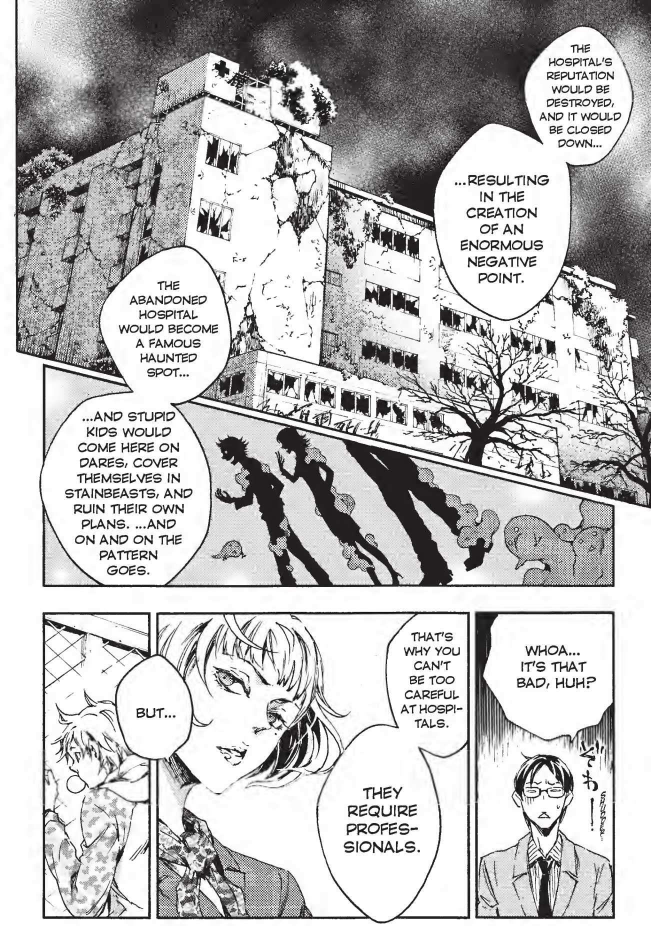

...I'LL BUY YOU A NEW GAME BOY.
WHISPER
DING
...
AND FIVE GAMES.
GRR ...
...I'LL JUST HAVE TO GET AN ADVANCE ON MY SALARY.
YOU GOT IT!
CASET HOME

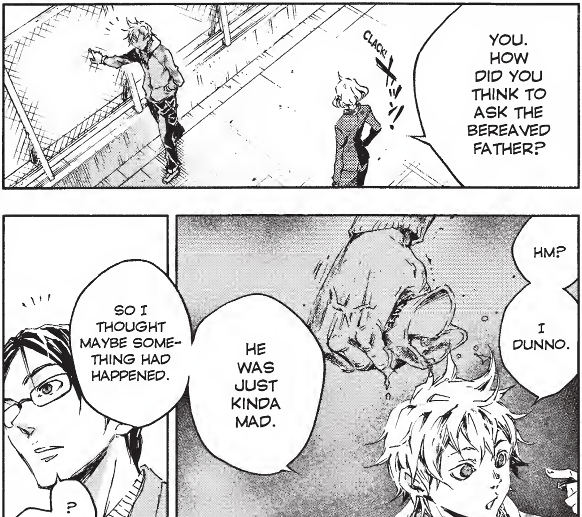
BLACK STAR
BLACK STAR
PWSSSHHH

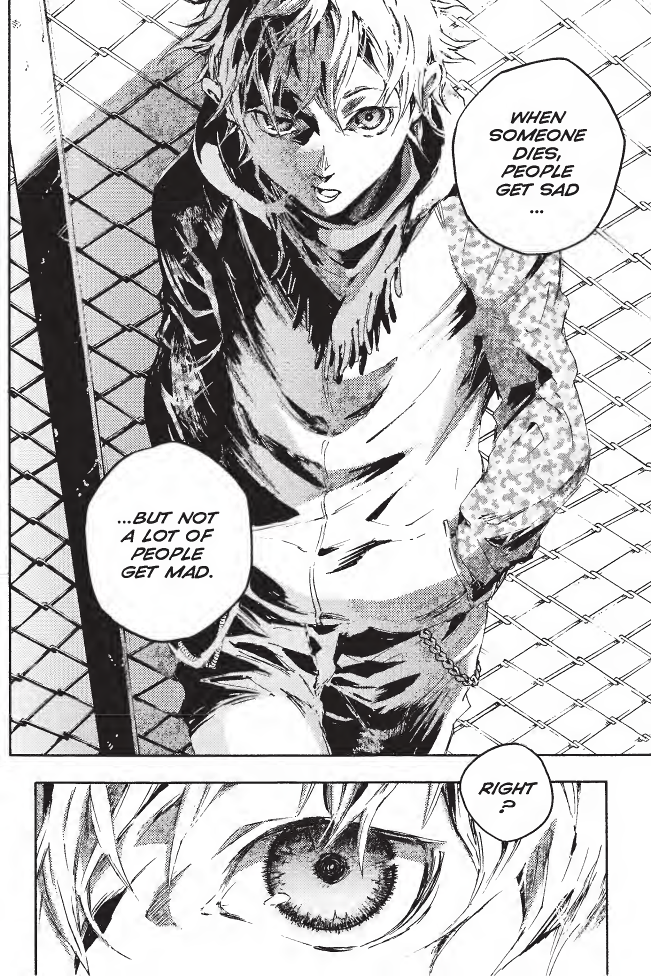

DONE!

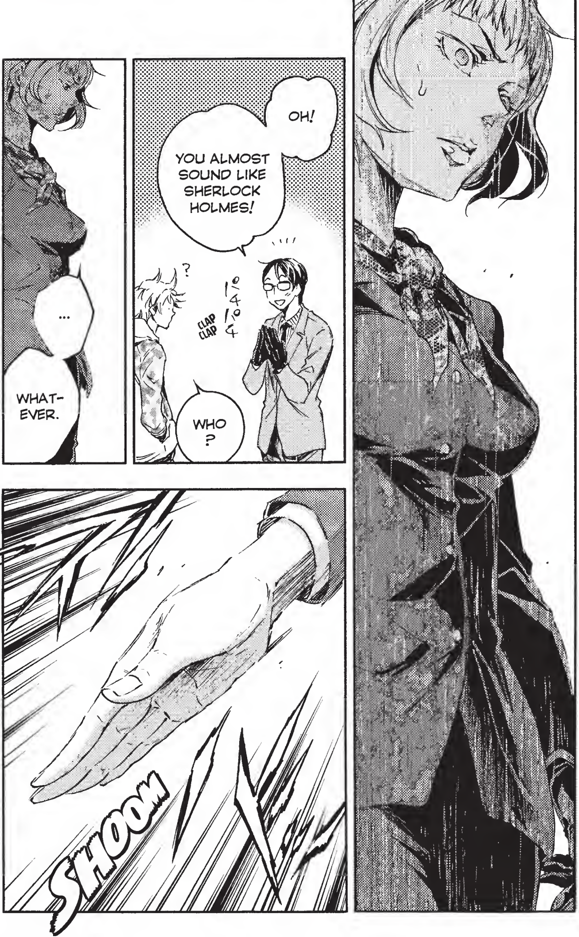

A HOSPITAL-ACQUIRED INFECTION, EH?

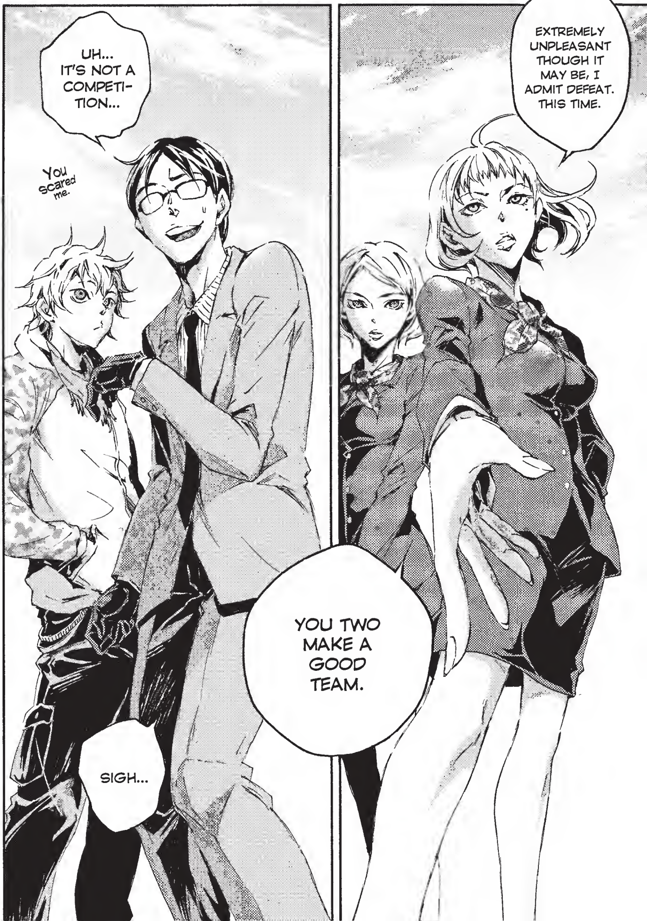

ALL TOLD, THERE WERE SIX NEGATIVE POINTS.
IN OTHER WORDS, AFTER THE FIRST BOTCHED OPERATION, THE NEGATIVE POINT DISRUPTED THE PLANS OF FIVE MORE PEOPLE. ...AN UTTER DISASTER.
RATTLE
MAKES ME WANT TO STRANGLE THE LAZY OAF WHO PRECEDED US.
AND SHE MIGHT ACTUALLY DO IT...
HOW COULD THEY HAVE KNOWN?
THE BOTCHED OPERATION WAS KEPT UNDER WRAPS.
BUT NOW WE KNOW HOW SCARY HOSPITAL-ACQUIRED INFECTIONS CAN BE.
I SUPPOSE.
HAD IT BEEN LEFT UNATTENDED, PATIENTS WHO OTHERWISE COULD HAVE BEEN SAVED WOULD HAVE STARTED DROPPING LIKE FLIES.
CLATTER...
10-168

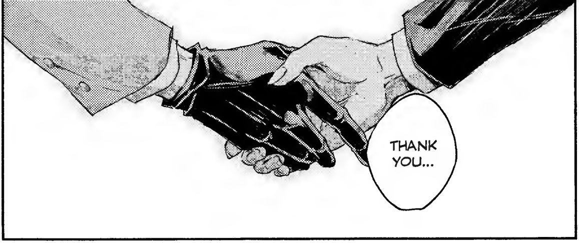

THE HOSPITAL'S REPUTATION WOULD BE DESTROYED, AND IT WOULD BE CLOSED DOWN...
...RESULTING IN THE CREATION OF AN ENORMOUS NEGATIVE POINT.
THE ABANDONED HOSPITAL WOULD BECOME A FAMOUS HAUNTED SPOT...
...AND STUPID KIDS WOULD COME HERE ON DARES, COVER THEMSELVES IN STAINBEASTS, AND RUIN THEIR OWN PLANS. ...AND ON AND ON THE PATTERN GOES.
WHOA... IT'S THAT BAD, HUH?
ぞわ-!
SHUDDER
THAT'S WHY YOU CAN'T BE TOO CAREFUL AT HOSPITALS.
THEY REQUIRE PROFESSIONALS.
BUT...

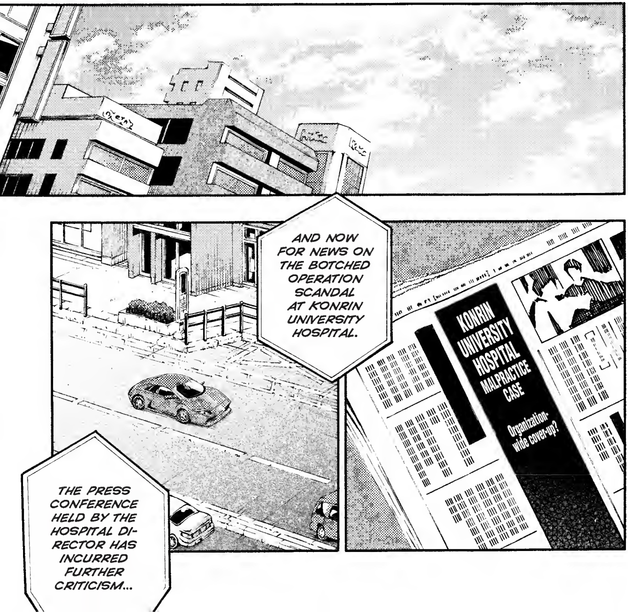

CLACK!
YOU. HOW DID YOU THINK TO ASK THE BEREAVED FATHER?
HM?
I DUNNO.
HE WAS JUST KINDA MAD.
SO I THOUGHT MAYBE SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED.
?
WHY?
HUH?
WELL, IT'S ODD, ISN'T IT?
KNOCK

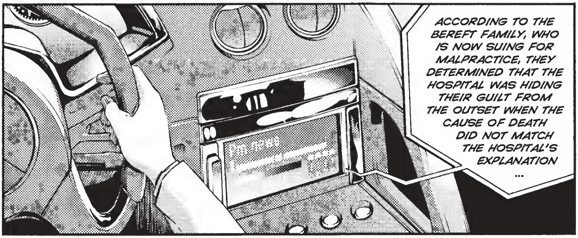

WHEN SOMEONE DIES, PEOPLE GET SAD ...
...BUT NOT A LOT OF PEOPLE GET MAD.
RIGHT ?

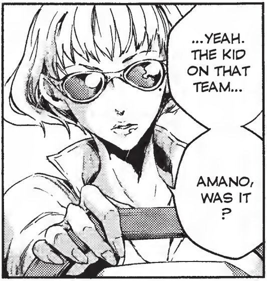

OH!
YOU ALMOST SOUND LIKE SHERLOCK HOLMES!
CLAP CLAP
?
WHO?
...
WHAT-EVER.
SHOOM

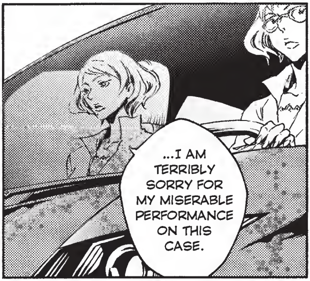

EXTREMELY UNPLEASANT THOUGH IT MAY BE, I ADMIT DEFEAT. THIS TIME.
YOU TWO MAKE A GOOD TEAM.
UH... IT'S NOT A COMPETITION...
You scared me.
SIGH...

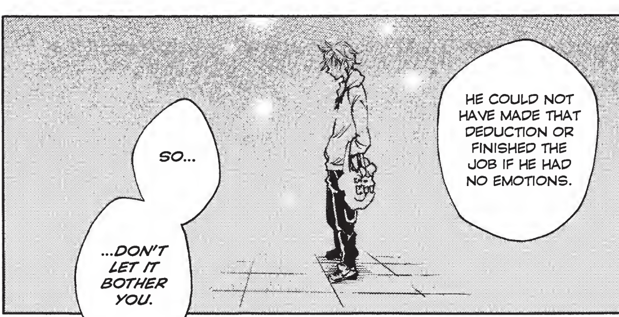

THANK YOU...

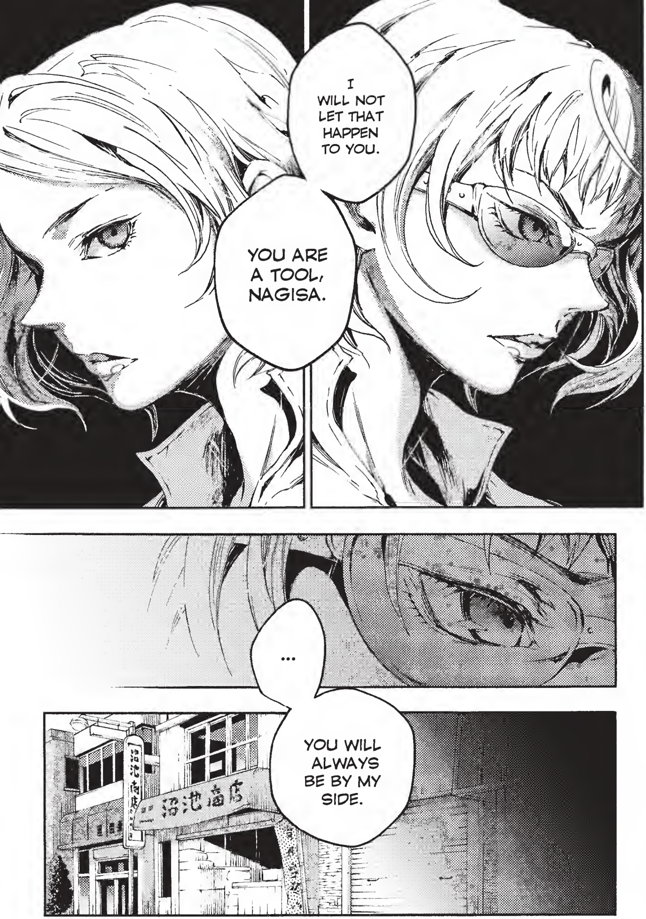

AND NOW FOR NEWS ON THE BOTCHED OPERATION SCANDAL AT KONRIN UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL.
KONRIN UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL MALPRACTICE CASE
Organization-wide cover-up?
THE PRESS CONFERENCE HELD BY THE HOSPITAL DIRECTOR HAS INCURRED FURTHER CRITICISM...


ACCORDING TO THE BEREFT FAMILY, WHO IS NOW SUING FOR MALPRACTICE, THEY DETERMINED THAT THE HOSPITAL WAS HIDING THEIR GUILT FROM THE OUTSET WHEN THE CAUSE OF DEATH DID NOT MATCH THE HOSPITAL'S EXPLANATION ...

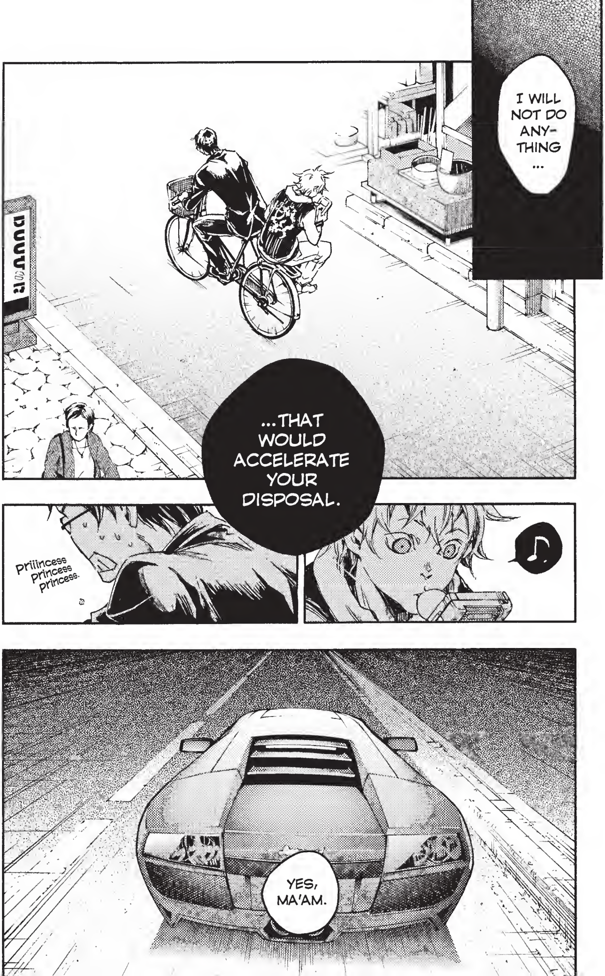

...YEAH. THE KID ON THAT TEAM...
AMANO, WAS IT ?

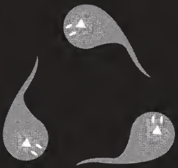

...I AM TERRIBLY SORRY FOR MY MISERABLE PERFORMANCE ON THIS CASE.

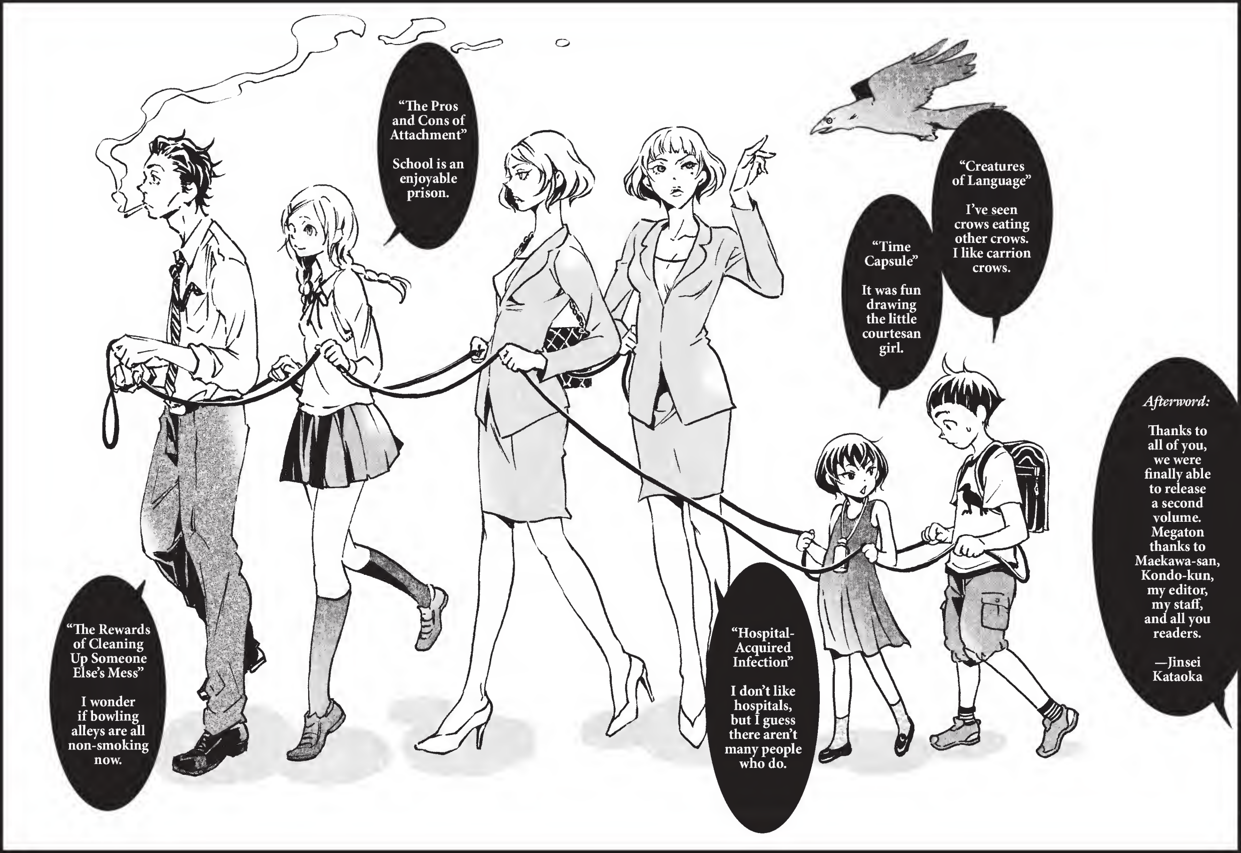

HE COULD NOT HAVE MADE THAT DEDUCTION OR FINISHED THE JOB IF HE HAD NO EMOTIONS.
SO...
...DON'T LET IT BOTHER YOU.


I WILL NOT LET THAT HAPPEN TO YOU.
YOU ARE A TOOL, NAGISA.
...
YOU WILL ALWAYS BE BY MY SIDE.
沼池商店

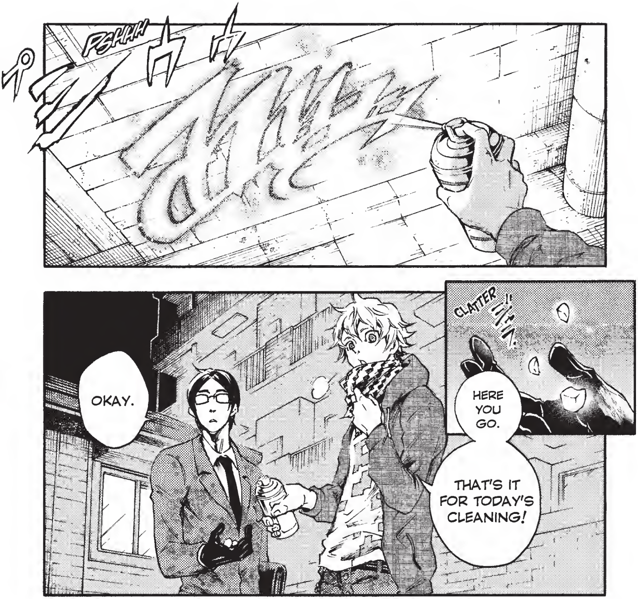
SIGN: **Numaike Shop**


I WILL NOT DO ANYTHING ...
...THAT WOULD ACCELERATE YOUR DISPOSAL.
♪
Priiincess Princess Princess.
YES, MA'AM.

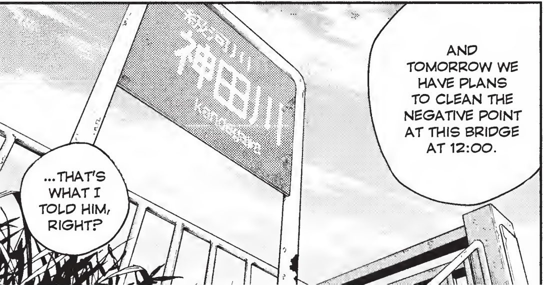


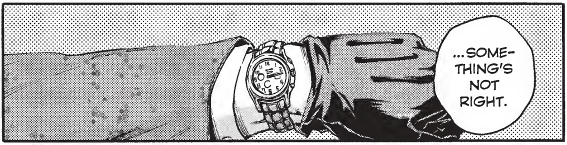

Afterword: Thanks to all of you, we were finally able to release a second volume. Megaton thanks to Maekawa-san, Kondo-kun, my editor, my staff, and all you readers. —Jinsei Kataoka
"Creatures of Language" I've seen crows eating other crows. I like carrion crows.
"Time Capsule" It was fun drawing the little courtesan girl.
"Hospital-Acquired Infection" I don't like hospitals, but I guess there aren't many people who do.
"The Pros and Cons of Attachment" School is an enjoyable prison.
"The Rewards of Cleaning Up Someone Else's Mess" I wonder if bowling alleys are all non-smoking now.

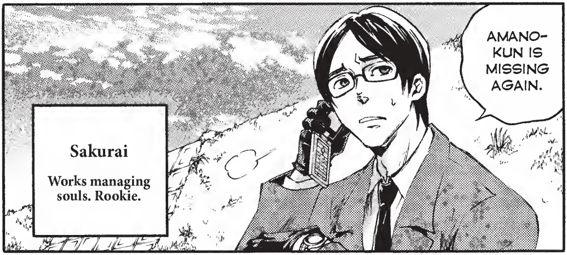
Episode 0


PSHHH
CLATTER
HERE YOU GO.
THAT'S IT FOR TODAY'S CLEANING!
OKAY.

SIGN: Class A River Kandagawa

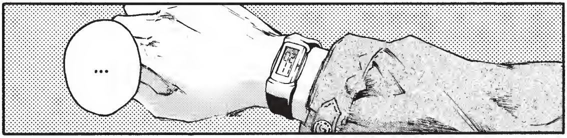

神田川
kandagawa
AND TOMORROW WE HAVE PLANS TO CLEAN THE NEGATIVE POINT AT THIS BRIDGE AT 12:00.
...THAT'S WHAT I TOLD HIM, RIGHT?

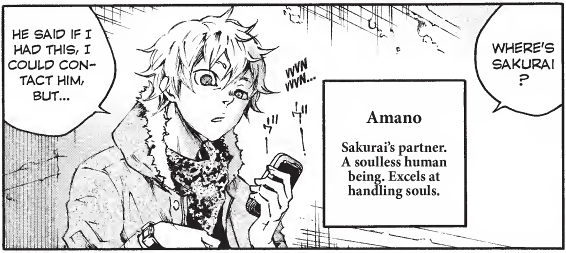

...SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT.


AMANO-KUN IS MISSING AGAIN.

Sakurai

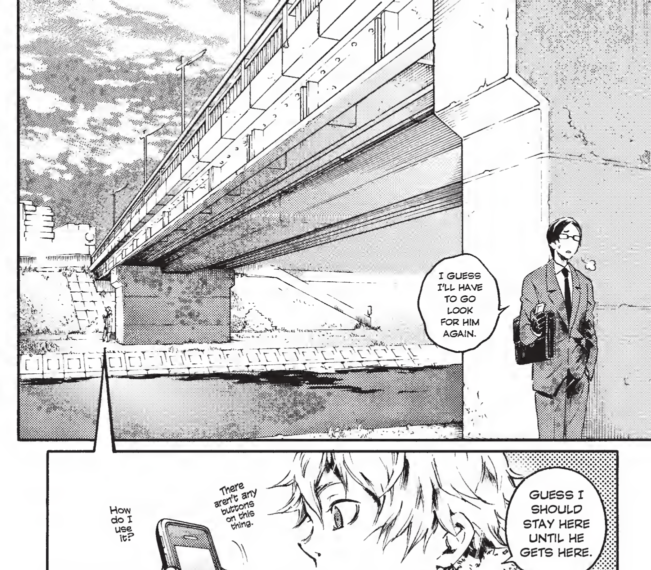
Works managing souls. Rookie.



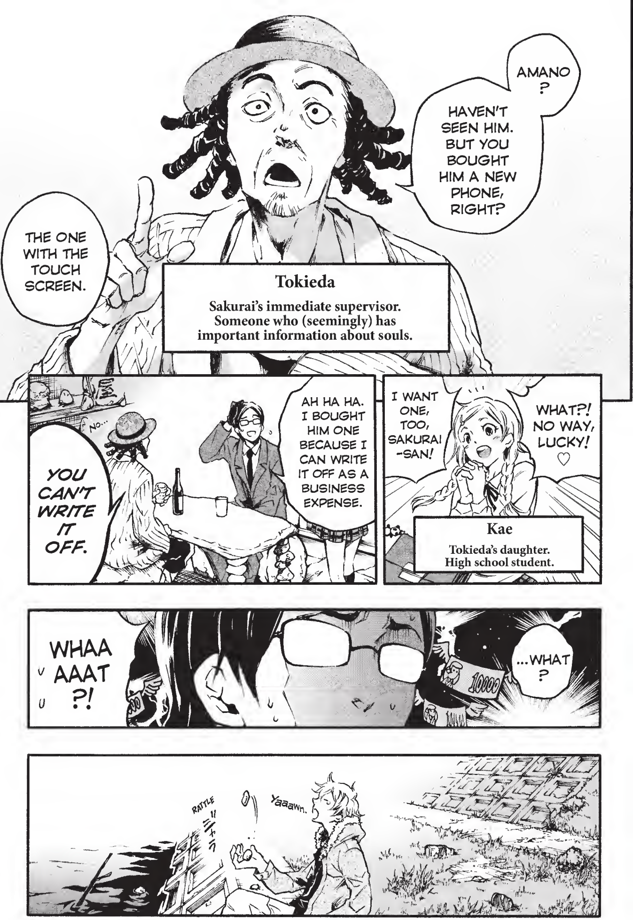

WHERE'S SAKURAI?
WVN WVN...
HE SAID IF I HAD THIS, I COULD CONTACT HIM, BUT...

Amano

Sakurai's partner. A soulless human being. Excels at handling souls.


I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO GO LOOK FOR HIM AGAIN.
GUESS I SHOULD STAY HERE UNTIL HE GETS HERE.
There aren't any buttons on this thing.
How do I use it?
(iphone)

SIGN: **Stone Shop**

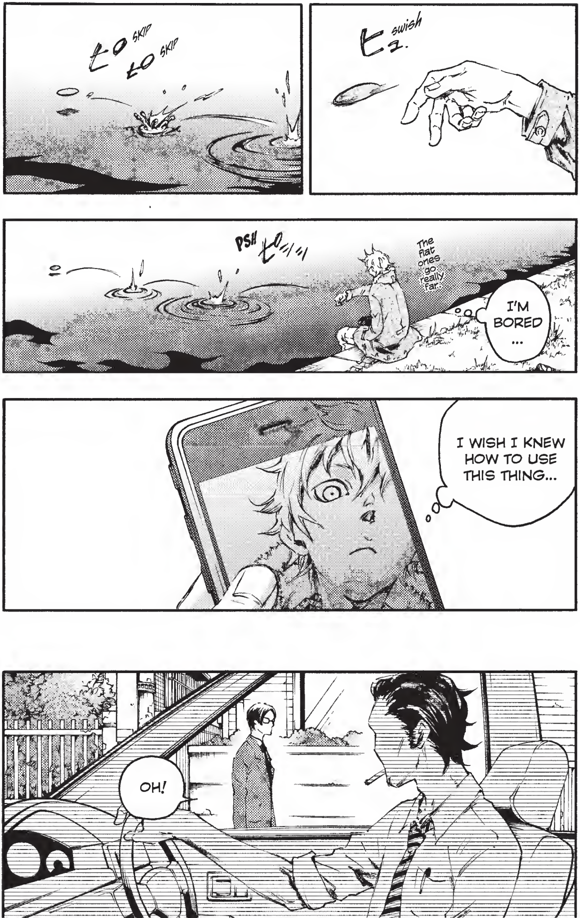

AMANO?
HAVEN'T SEEN HIM. BUT YOU BOUGHT HIM A NEW PHONE, RIGHT?
THE ONE WITH THE TOUCH SCREEN.
WHAT?! NO WAY, LUCKY! ♡
I WANT ONE, TOO, SAKURAI-SAN!
AH HA HA. I BOUGHT HIM ONE BECAUSE I CAN WRITE IT OFF AS A BUSINESS EXPENSE.
No...
YOU CAN'T WRITE IT OFF.
...WHAT?
WHAAAAAT?!
10000
Yaaawn.
RATTLE
ジャラ

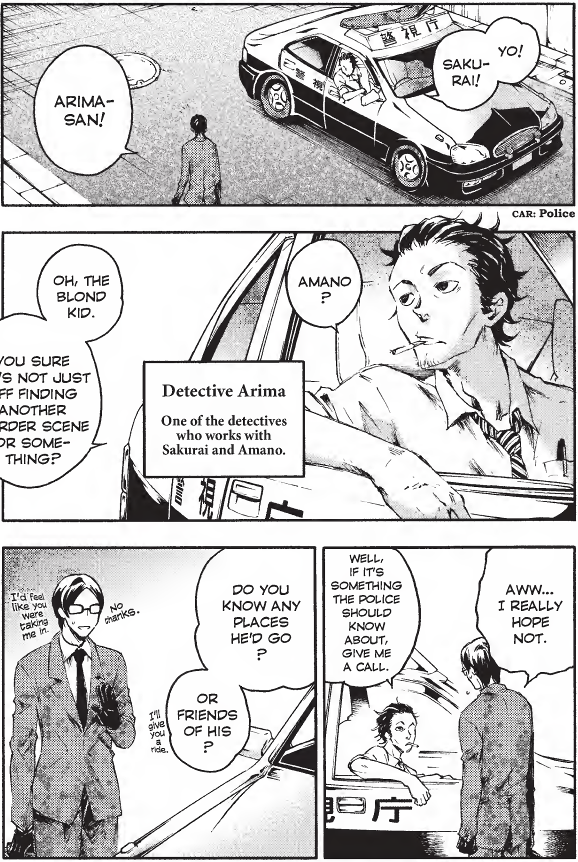
Tokieda

Sakurai's immediate supervisor. Someone who (seemingly) has important information about souls.

Kae

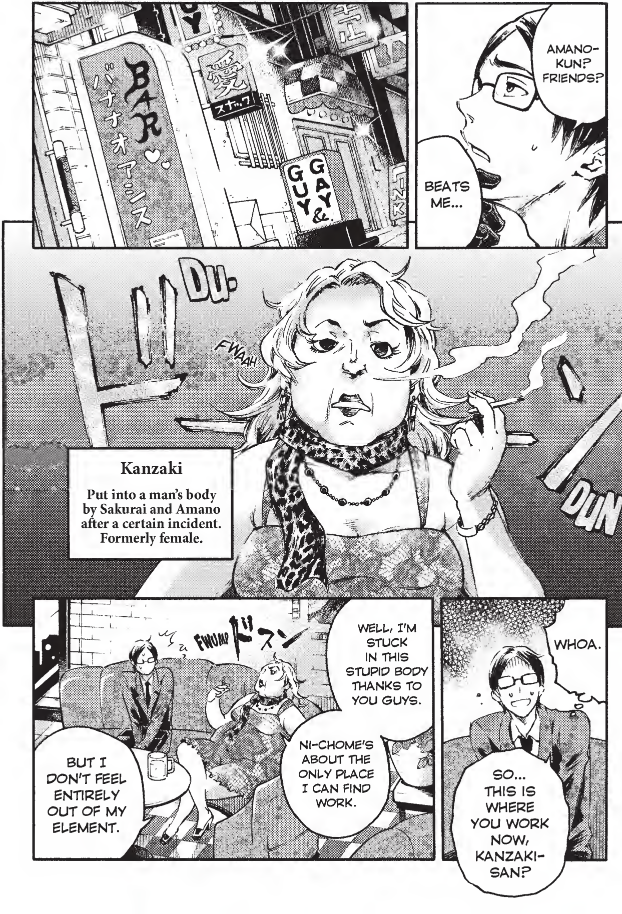
Tokieda's daughter. High school student.

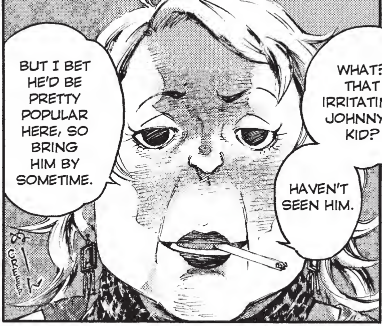

ヒュ swish
ピョ SKIP
ピョ SKIP
PSH ピョ
The flat ones go really far...
I'M BORED...
I WISH I KNEW HOW TO USE THIS THING...
OH!

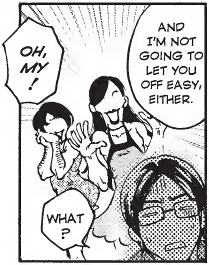

YO! SAKU-RAI!
ARIMA-SAN!
AMANO?
OH, THE BLOND KID.
YOU SURE HE'S NOT JUST OFF FINDING ANOTHER MURDER SCENE OR SOMETHING?
Detective Arima
One of the detectives who works with Sakurai and Amano.
AWW... I REALLY HOPE NOT.
WELL, IF IT'S SOMETHING THE POLICE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT, GIVE ME A CALL.
DO YOU KNOW ANY PLACES HE'D GO?
OR FRIENDS OF HIS?
I'll give you a ride.
No thanks.
I'd feel like you were taking me in.

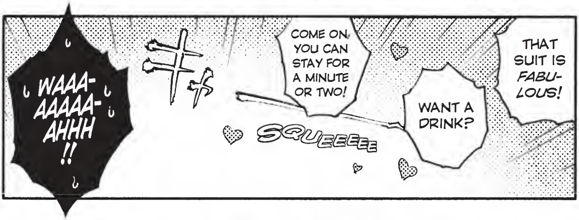
CAR: Police

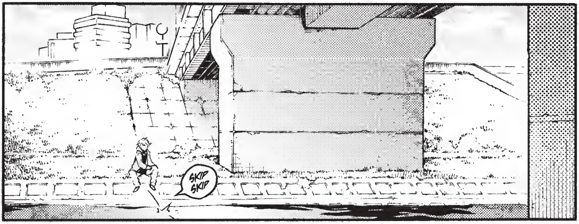
SIGN (LEFT): **Bar Banana Oasis** SIGN (CENTER): **Love Snack**

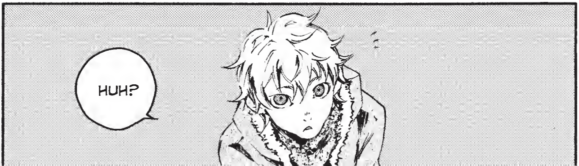

AMANO-KUN? FRIENDS?
BEATS ME...
BAR
バナナオアシス
愛
スナック
GUY GAY &
DU-
FWAAH
DUN
Kanzaki
Put into a man's body by Sakurai and Amano after a certain incident. Formerly female.
WHOA.
SO... THIS IS WHERE YOU WORK NOW, KANZAKI-SAN?
FWUMP ドスン
WELL, I'M STUCK IN THIS STUPID BODY THANKS TO YOU GUYS.
NI-CHOME'S ABOUT THE ONLY PLACE I CAN FIND WORK.
BUT I DON'T FEEL ENTIRELY OUT OF MY ELEMENT.

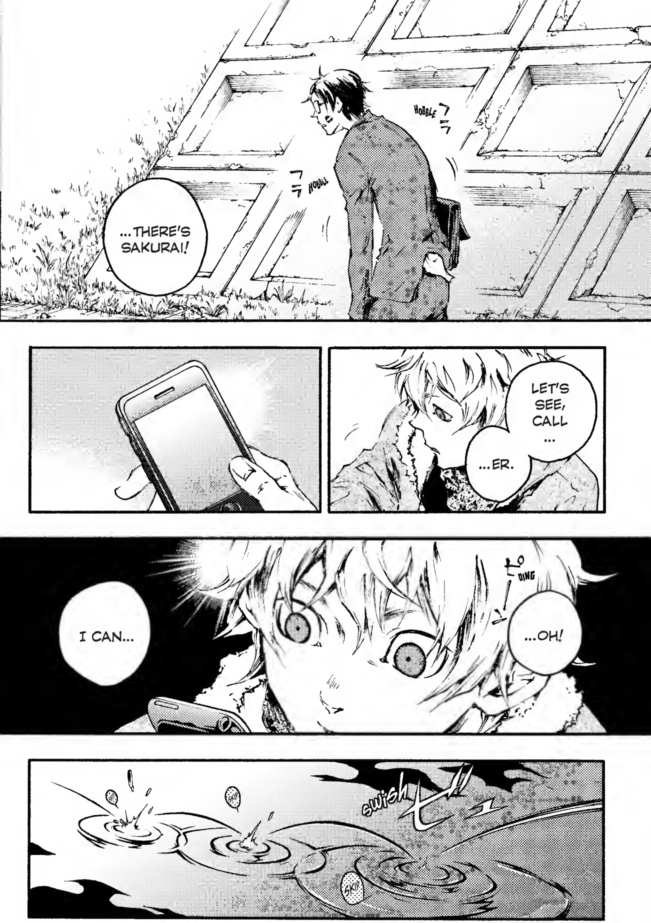

WHAT? THAT IRRITATING JOHNNY'S KID?
HAVEN'T SEEN HIM.
BUT I BET HE'D BE PRETTY POPULAR HERE, SO BRING HIM BY SOMETIME.
CREEEP

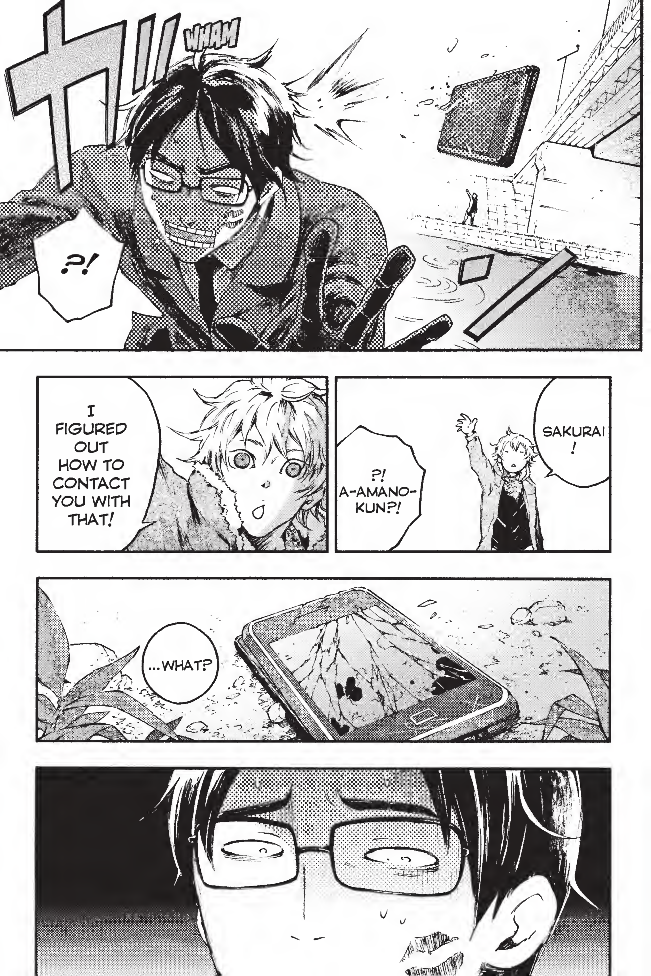

AND I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU OFF EASY, EITHER.
OH, MY!
WHAT?

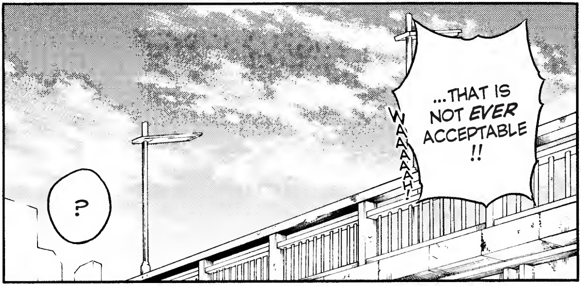

THAT SUIT IS *FABULOUS!*
WANT A DRINK?
COME ON, YOU CAN STAY FOR A MINUTE OR TWO!
SQUEEEEEE
WAAA-AAAAA-AHHH!!

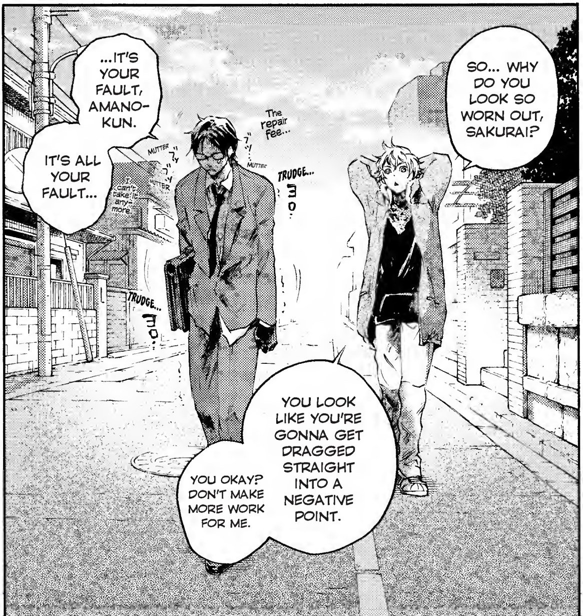

SKIP SKIP


HUH?


HOBBLE
HOBBLE
...THERE'S SAKURAI!
LET'S SEE, CALL ...
...ER.
DING
...OH!
I CAN...
SWISH
SKIP
SKIP
SKIP


WHAM
?!
SAKURAI!
?! A-AMANO-KUN?!
I FIGURED OUT HOW TO CONTACT YOU WITH THAT!
...WHAT?


...THAT IS NOT *EVER* ACCEPTABLE !!
WAAAAAH!
?


SO... WHY DO YOU LOOK SO WORN OUT, SAKURAI?
The repair fee...
ブツ…
MUTTER
TRUDGE... ヨロ…
...IT'S YOUR FAULT, AMANO-KUN.
IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT...
MUTTER ブツ ブツ MUTTER
I can't take it any more.
TRUDGE... ヨロ…
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE GONNA GET DRAGGED STRAIGHT INTO A NEGATIVE POINT.
YOU OKAY? DON'T MAKE MORE WORK FOR ME.

Translation Notes

Collectors, page 85
Sakurai and Amano are psycholith collectors, as in there are psycholith pieces lying around and they collect them, like garbage collectors. The collectors Tokieda refers to here are hobbyists, people who collect psycholiths because they think they're neat.

Makgeolli, page 86
Makgeolli is an alcoholic beverage from Korea.

Until age seven, they are with the gods, page 97
As Tokieda explains, the theory behind this saying is that young children have a stronger connection to the spiritual world. This may be partly because children sometimes seem to see things that adults do not, and partly because, back when the saying came about, the young were more apt to dying. Thus, it was believed that a person's soul wasn't firmly attached to the physical world until the age of seven, and up to that point, they belonged more to the realm of spirits.

Cro, page 118
The name of this bird is a bit of a play on words. In Japanese, it's *kuro*, which means black, but since the U is swallowed, it also sounds like a really quick way to say the English word "crow".

Please save us, page 120
When this old man sees Amano surrounded by animals, he is reminded of Buddha, who is often depicted surrounded by animals. Here, he is reciting a Buddhist chant that literally means "I devote myself to Amitabha." Amitabha is the principal Buddha in the Pure Land Sect of Buddhism, and by repeating that he is devoting himself to him, he is essentially asking him to have mercy on him and save him from evil.

They say the fly has her spleen and the ant her gall, page 123
This is one of a few sayings meaning that even the smallest of insects have minds of their own. The Japanese saying translates more literally to "even an inchworm has half a soul," but the word for "worm" can also refer to any type of bug, including ladybugs. The phrase is often translated to a saying that originated from Shakespeare, "even a worm will turn." The translators felt the images of the fly and the ant would match the ladybug a little better.

***Yatagarasu*, page 157**
The *yatagarasu* is the Japanese name of the three-legged crows from Japanese and Chinese folklore. One such crow was sent by the sun goddess Amaterasu to guide Emperor Jimmu from the land of Kumano to the land of Yamato, which he then conquered and ruled.

Priiincess princess princess, page 210
This is the theme to an anime within an anime, *Love ☆ Hime* from *Yowamushi Pedal*. The hero of *Yowamushi Pedal* will sing this song to himself to encourage himself during difficult bicycling endeavors, such as pedaling up steep hills.

Ni-chome, page 222
Shinjuku Ni-chome is an area in Tokyo that is also known as Gay Town, and has the world's highest concentration of gay bars.

That irritating Johnny's kid, page 223
Johnny's is a collection of male pop star idols represented by Johnny & Associates. In other words, Kanzaki is suggesting that Amano looks like he stepped right out of a boy band.

Livingstone volume 2

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

STORY BY Tomohiro Maekawa, ART BY Jinsei Kataoka

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